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**Commando**

WAR STORIES IN PICTURES



**STOLEN GLORY**



Stars of Speedway—Bobby Schwartz

# STOLEN GLORY

FOR CENTURIES PAST, STATUES HAVE BEEN RAISED TO THE GLORY OF HEROES — AND IN MANY CASES THE MEN AND THEIR DEEDS HAVE BEEN SADLY FORGOTTEN WITH THE PASSING OF TIME.

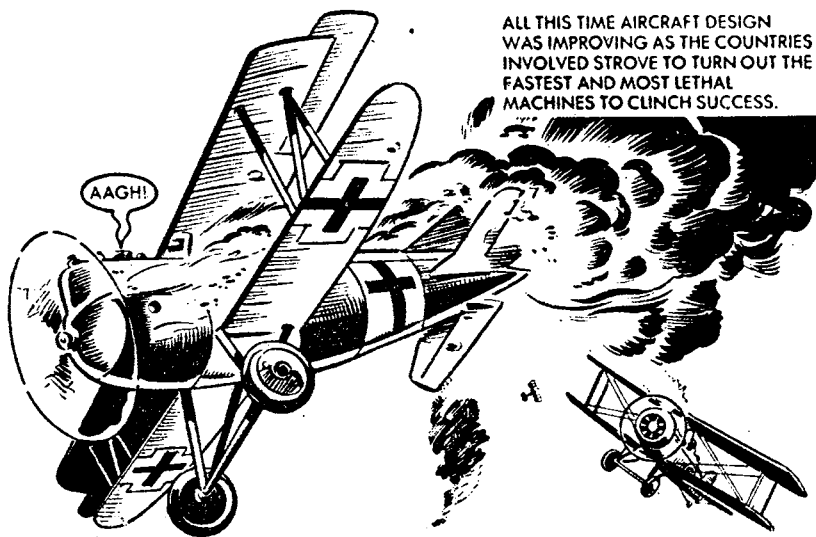


BUT THIS STATUE TO THE HONOUR OF RENE DUMONT, A FIRST WORLD WAR FLYING ACE, WOULD NEVER SUFFER SUCH AN INDIGNITY. WHY? WELL, IT'S QUITE A STORY ...

AS THE FIRST WORLD WAR DRAGGED ON IN EUROPE, IT APPEARED THAT THE COSTLY STALEMATE WOULD GO ON FOREVER. ONLY IN THE AIR DID IT SEEM THAT ONE SIDE MIGHT SECURE SOME KIND OF VICTORY.



ALL THIS TIME AIRCRAFT DESIGN WAS IMPROVING AS THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED STROVE TO TURN OUT THE FASTEST AND MOST LETHAL MACHINES TO CLINCH SUCCESS.



AS NEW PILOTS CAME AND WENT ONLY A FEW HAD THAT ESSENTIAL COMBINATION OF SKILL AND LUCK TO MAKE THEIR NAME. SUCH A MAN WAS THE FRENCH ACE, CAPTAIN RENE DUMONT.

HE MUST HAVE BEEN ASLEEP, LETTING ME GET SO CLOSE. THE BOCHES MUST BE SENDING THEM UP HALF-TRAINED.

THE VICKERS MACHINE-GUN MOUNTED ON HIS NIEUPORT SEVENTEEN HAD FIRED ONLY A SHORT BURST FOR ANOTHER KILL TO BE ADDED TO RENE'S SCORE.

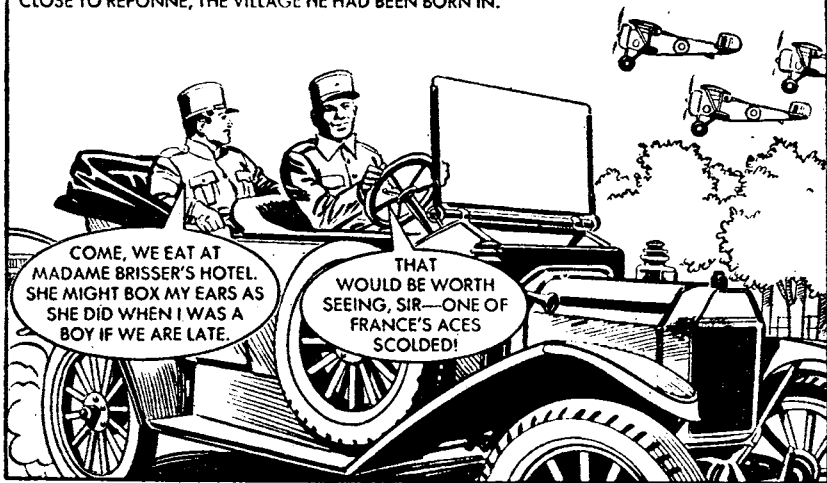
BACK AT THE FRENCH BASE, ANXIOUS PILOTS AWAITED RENE'S RETURN. HE WAS A WELL-LIKED AVIATOR WITH A STRICT CODE OF HONOUR.

AT LAST! WE THOUGHT SOMETHING WAS WRONG.

BUT WHAT COULD BE WRONG? IS THERE YET A BOCHE WHO CAN NAIL ME?

IT WAS A JOKE—NO BOAST EVER CROSSED HIS LIPS.

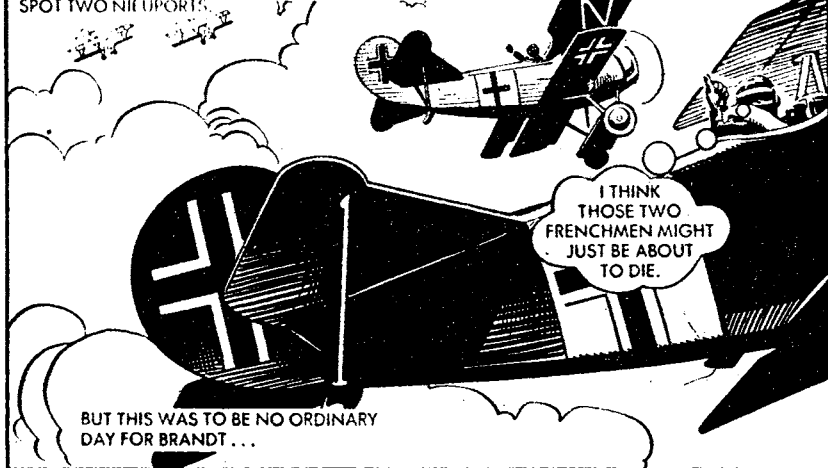
DESPITE THE WAR, RENE WAS A HAPPY MAN. HE ENJOYED THE THRILL OF AIR COMBAT, AND HIS SQUADRON WAS NOW POSTED CLOSE TO REPONNE, THE VILLAGE HE HAD BEEN BORN IN.



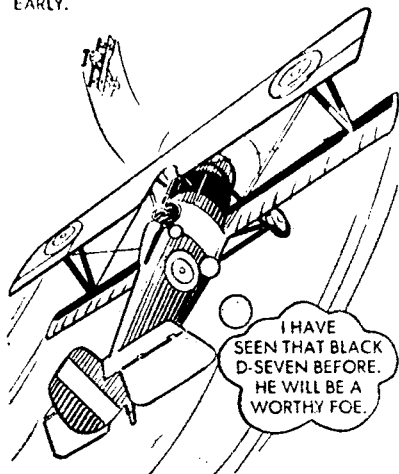
THE GERMANS ALSO HAD THEIR TOP PILOTS. CAPTAIN MAX BRANDT, RUTHLESS MASTER AT THE DEADLY ART OF AIR WARFARE, WAS ALREADY AN OPPONENT TO FEAR.



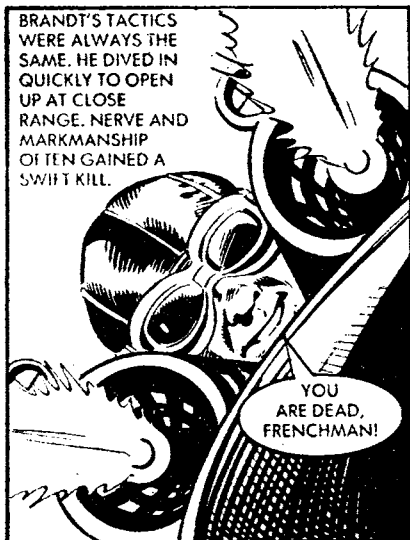
THE GERMAN ENJOYED HIS FAME, ENSURING THAT EVERYBODY RECOGNISED HIS AIRCRAFT BY HAVING IT PAINTED ALL BLACK. AND ON THIS PATROL HE WAS QUICK TO SPOT TWO NIEUPORTS.



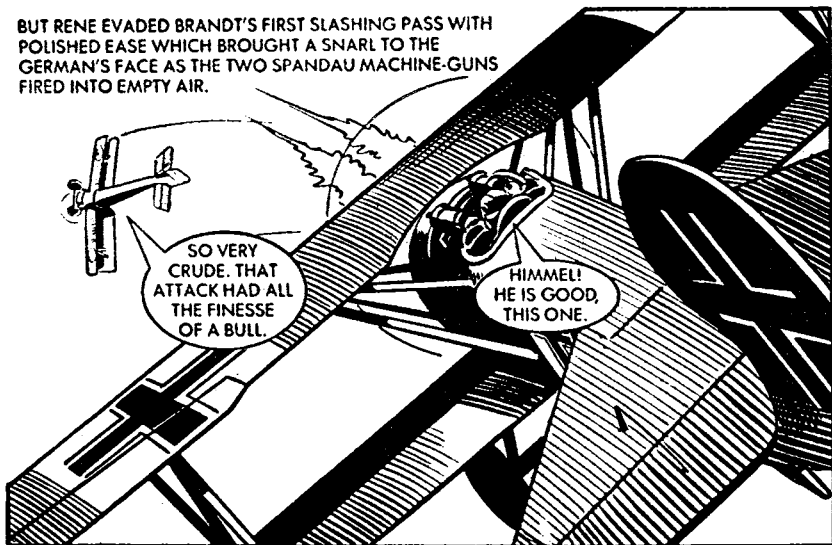
... FOR ONE OF THE FRENCHMEN WAS RENE DUMONT. AND HE SPOTTED THE DANGER EARLY.



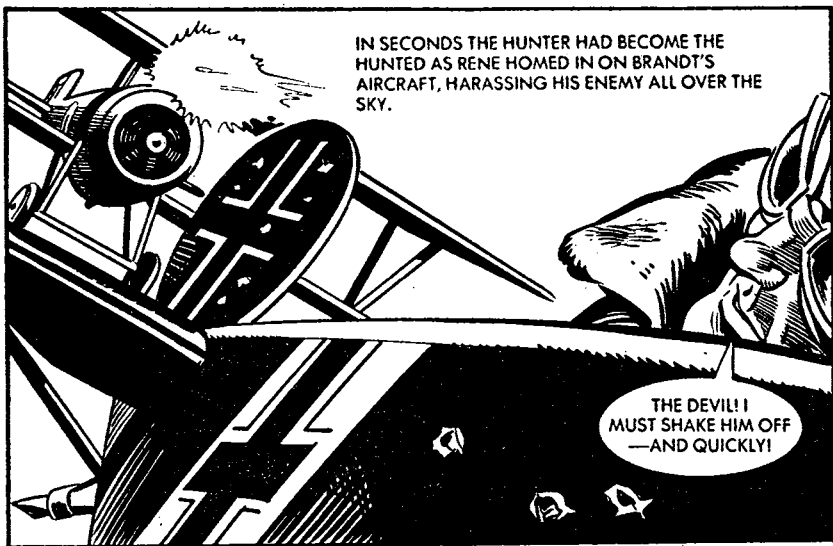
BRANDT'S TACTICS WERE ALWAYS THE SAME. HE DIVED IN QUICKLY TO OPEN UP AT CLOSE RANGE. NERVE AND MARKSMANSHIP OFTEN GAINED A SWIFT KILL.



BUT RENE EVADED BRANDT'S FIRST SLASHING PASS WITH POLISHED EASE WHICH BROUGHT A SNARL TO THE GERMAN'S FACE AS THE TWO SPANDAU MACHINE-GUNS FIRED INTO EMPTY AIR.



IN SECONDS THE HUNTER HAD BECOME THE HUNTED AS RENE HOMED IN ON BRANDT'S AIRCRAFT, HARASSING HIS ENEMY ALL OVER THE SKY.





MEANWHILE RENE'S COMRADE WAS OUT OF THE FIGHT, NO MATCH FOR HIS OPPONENT. AND THIS TURNED THE ODDS AGAINST THE LONE FRENCH PILOT AS THE OTHER GERMAN TURNED TO AID BRANDT.

MAX SEEMS TO BE HAVING A LITTLE TROUBLE WITH THAT FROG. I SHALL SOON SEND HIM DOWN AFTER HIS COMRADE.

RENE SAW THE SECOND D-SEVEN BORING IN AND HIS REACTION WAS SWIFT. ONE TIGHT ROLL AND HE AVENGED HIS FALLEN COMRADE WITH A DEVASTATING BURST.

YOU WILL NOT FIND ME EASY MEAT!

LIEBER GOTT...

ONLY DEATH AWAITED THE VICTIM NOW.

INFURIATED BY HIS COMRADE'S FATE, BRANDT THREW HIS FIGHTER AT THE FRENCH MACHINE. BUT INSTEAD OF AVENGING HIS FRIEND, HE ALMOST JOINED HIM AS RENE TWISTED HIS AIRCRAFT OUT OF TROUBLE.

HE IS  
GOOD, BUT NOT  
GOOD ENOUGH...

MEIN GOTT,  
HOW DID HE GET  
BEHIND ME?

ONE THING SAVED BRANDT—RENE RAN OUT OF AMMUNITION, BUT HE WAVED CHEERFULLY AS HE PULLED CLEAR OF HIS OPPONENT WHOSE MERCEDES ENGINE WAS NOW MISFIRING ROUGHLY.

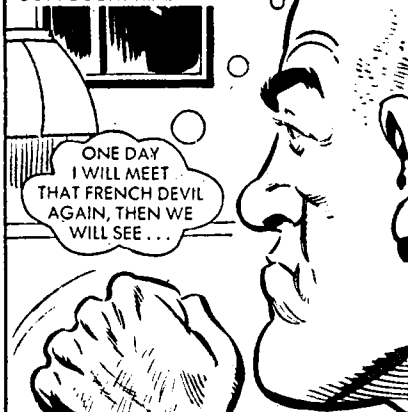
BONNE CHANCE,  
PERHAPS WE WILL  
MEET AGAIN.

I CANNOT  
PURSUE HIM,  
THE AIRCRAFT HAS  
TAKEN TOO MUCH  
PUNISHMENT!

BRANDT'S LANDING BACK AT HIS AIRFIELD WAS SHAKY. ONE LOOK AT HIS ANGRY FACE TOLD THE ONLOOKERS THIS HAD BEEN A BAD PATROL.

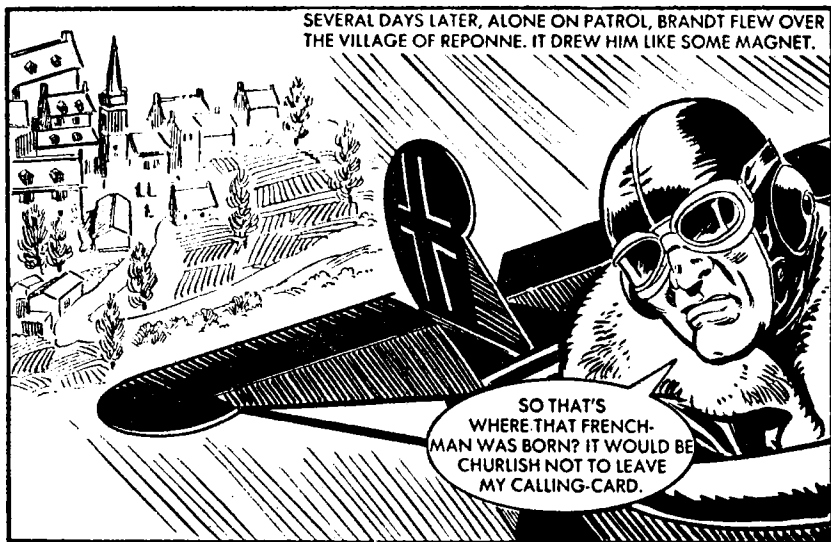


STUNG BY HIS OWN CLOSE CALL, BRANDT WAS FURIOUS TO THINK THERE WAS A FRENCH PILOT WHO COULD SAY HE HAD OUT-FLOWN AND OUT-FOUGHT HIM.



IT DID NOT TAKE BRANDT LONG TO DISCOVER THE IDENTITY OF THE PILOT WHO HAD HUMILIATED HIM. RENE'S NIEUPORT WAS WELL KNOWN IN THAT AREA.





NEWS OF THE ATTACK REACHED RENE THAT SAME DAY WITH A CLEAR DESCRIPTION OF THE ALL-BLACK AIRCRAFT.

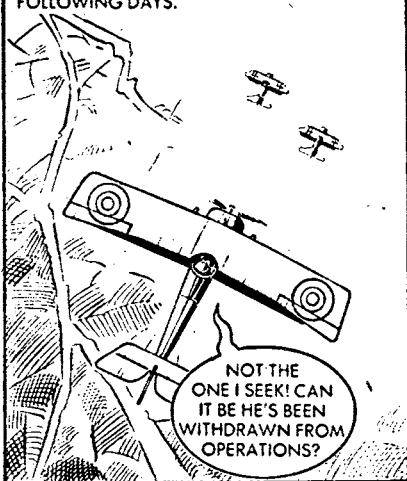


RENE HAD LOST GOOD FRIENDS IN THAT ATTACK, FRIENDS HE VOWED WOULD NOT GO UNAVENGED.

AND THIS TIME I SHALL NOT LEAVE THE BOCHE UNTIL I SEE HIM GO DOWN IN FLAMES. THIS I SWEAR!



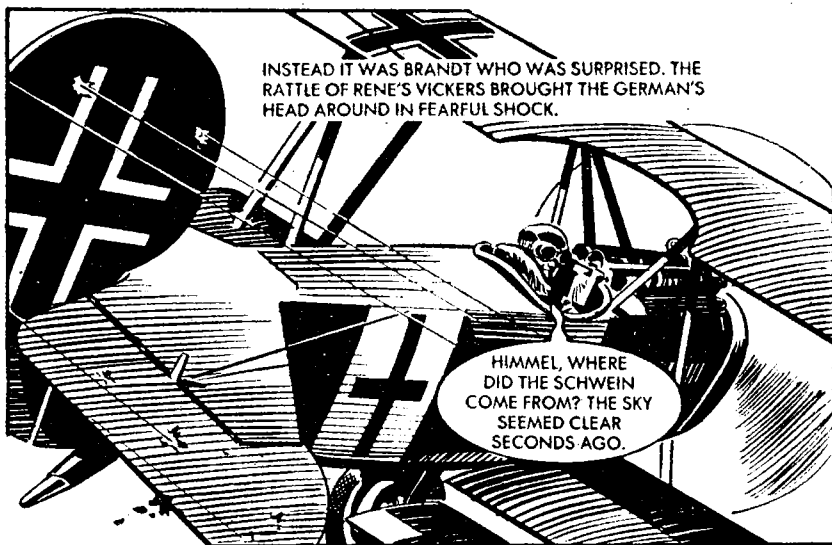
GRIMLY HE FOUGHT ON, BUT THERE WAS NO SIGN OF HIS QUARRY IN THE FOLLOWING DAYS.



THEN AT LAST HE SAW THE AIRCRAFT HE HAD BEEN WAITING FOR. BRANDT WAS STALKING A SLOWER BRITISH KITE, UNAWARE HE HAD BEEN SPOTTED BY RENE.

SO, THE VULTURE THINKS HE HAS AN EASY KILL . . .

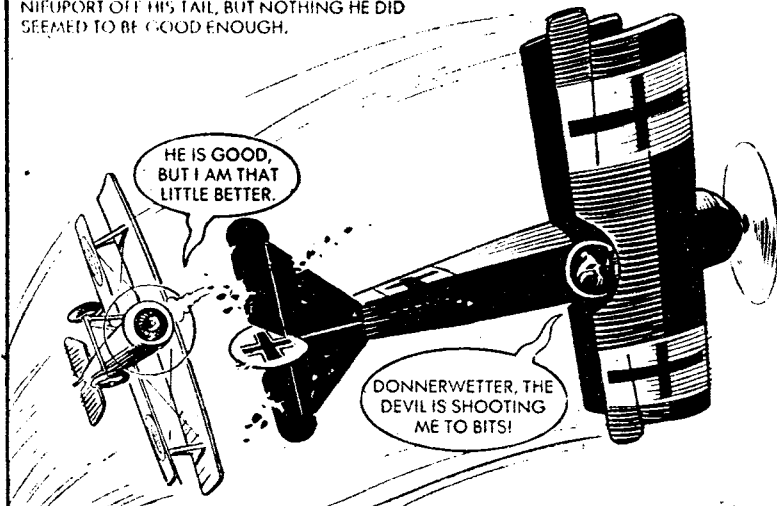
JUST A LITTLE CLOSER AND THE FOOL IS FINISHED . . .



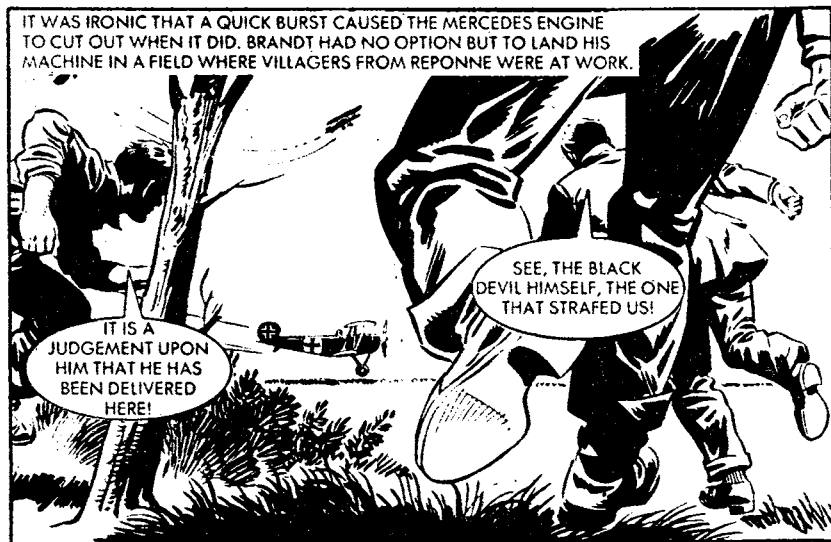
INSTEAD IT WAS BRANDT WHO WAS SURPRISED. THE RATTLE OF RENE'S VICKERS BROUGHT THE GERMAN'S HEAD AROUND IN FEARFUL SHOCK.

HIMMEL, WHERE DID THE SCHWEIN COME FROM? THE SKY SEEMED CLEAR SECONDS AGO.

THE GERMAN TRIED ALL HE COULD TO SHAKE THE  
NIFUPORT OFF HIS TAIL, BUT NOTHING HE DID  
SEEMED TO BE GOOD ENOUGH.



IT WAS IRONIC THAT A QUICK BURST CAUSED THE MERCEDES ENGINE  
TO CUT OUT WHEN IT DID. BRANDT HAD NO OPTION BUT TO LAND HIS  
MACHINE IN A FIELD WHERE VILLAGERS FROM REPONNE WERE AT WORK.



THE HANDS WHICH DRAGGED THE GERMAN ACE FROM HIS COCKPIT WERE NONE TOO GENTLE. FEAR ADDED TO BRANDT'S RANTING.



THE OLD MEDIAEVAL STOCKS WERE STILL A FEATURE OF THE VILLAGE SQUARE AND BRANDT WOULD HAVE PREFERRED DEATH TO THE INDIGNITY WHICH FOLLOWED. RENE HAD LANDED NEARBY TO SAVE THE GERMAN FROM THE EXPECTED LYNCHING AND EVEN HIS GREAT ANGER LESSENER AT THE SIGHT HE SAW.





ONLY THE ARRIVAL OF A FRENCH ARMY DETACHMENT SAVED BRANDT FROM ANYTHING WORSE THAN THE STOCKS. HE WAS HURRIED AWAY AFTER RENE HAD EXPLAINED ALL TO THE UNIT'S OFFICER.



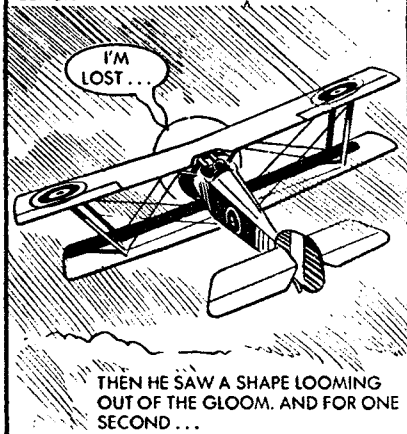
BUT BRANDT WAS NOT TO SPEND THE REST OF THE WAR IN FRENCH HANDS. A GERMAN OFFENSIVE SAW TO THAT. SO SWIFT WAS THE MOVE THAT THE FRENCH WERE CAUGHT BY SURPRISE.



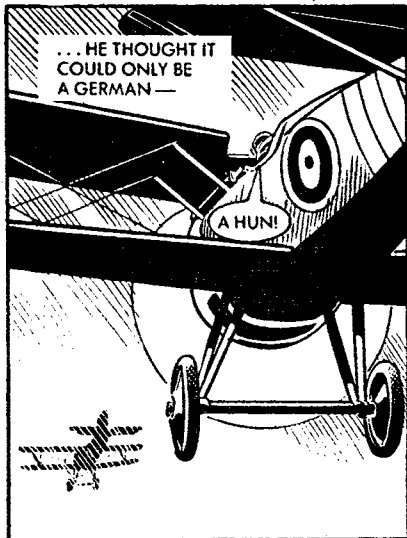
BUT THAT WAS NOT TO BE. FATE HAD SELECTED SOMEONE TO CHANGE ALL THAT—BRITISH LIEUTENANT DON DALE WHO WAS AS NEW TO THE DEADLY GAME OF AIR COMBAT AS HIS GLEAMING SOPWITH CAMEL.



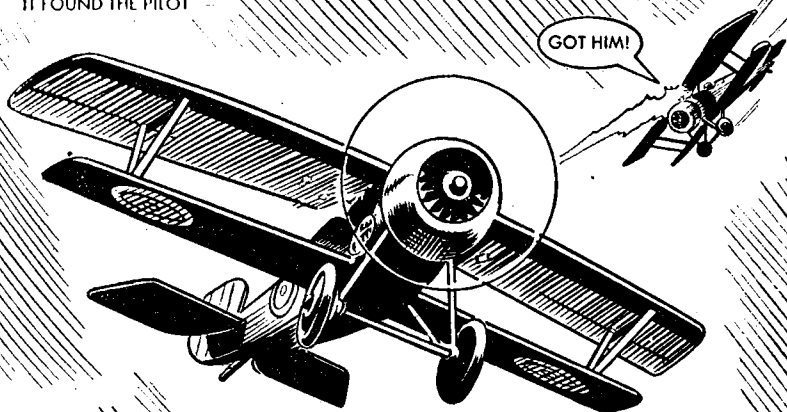
THE WEATHER CHANGED DRAMATICALLY DURING THAT PATROL, AND DON SOON FOUND HIMSELF ALONE IN THICK MIST, HIS LE-RHONE ENGINE CLATTERING EERILY.



... HE THOUGHT IT COULD ONLY BE A GERMAN —

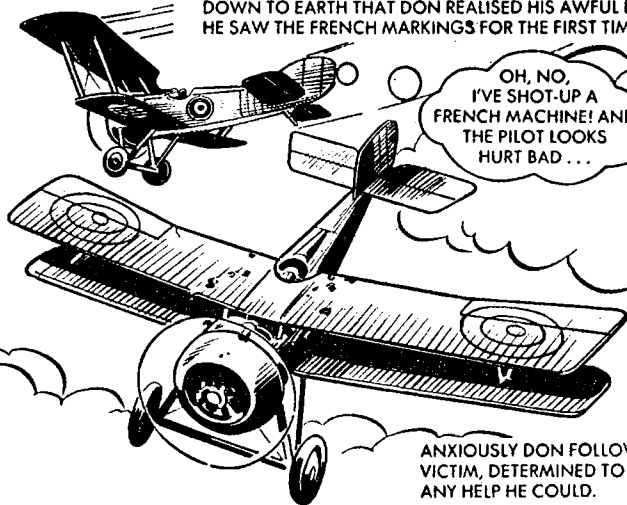


REFLEX DID THE REST AS DON LET RIP WITH HIS TWO VICKERS MACHINE GUNS. THE BURST OF FIRE WAS SHORT BUT IT FOUND THE PILOT



— AND IT WAS RENE DUMONT, FLYING A LONE RECONNAISSANCE PATROL IN HIS NIEUPORT.

IT WAS ONLY WHEN THE DAMAGED KITE BEGAN TO FLUTTER DOWN TO EARTH THAT DON REALISED HIS AWFUL ERROR AS HE SAW THE FRENCH MARKINGS FOR THE FIRST TIME.



A FIELD LAY IN THEIR PATH AND RENE DUMONT GOT HIS MACHINE DOWN WITHOUT THE CRASH DON THOUGHT WAS INEVITABLE.

HE MADE IT — BUT WHY DID THIS AWFUL THING HAVE TO HAPPEN?

THE FRENCH PILOT SLUMPED BACK AS HE CUT HIS ENGINE WHILE THE SOPWITH CAMEL ALSO SWUNG IN TO LAND.

RENE WAS CLOSE TO DEATH WHEN DON REACHED HIM. THE ENGLISH PILOT'S STAMMERED WORDS WERE ENOUGH TO TELL THE DYING MAN THE STORY.

I DIDN'T MEAN TO SHOOT AT YOU. YOU CAME OUT OF THAT FOG SO SUDDENLY.

POOR YOUNG DEVIL. I MUST ASSURE HIM THIS IS UNDERSTANDABLE, THAT I DO NOT BLAME HIM . . .

IT WAS A BRAVE, UNSELFISH ACT BY RENE AS HE SOUGHT TO REASSURE DON, EVEN AS HE FELT LIFE SLIPPING FROM HIM.



BUT THERE WAS NOTHING ANYBODY COULD HAVE DONE FOR RENE. THE FRENCH ACE WOULD FLY NO MORE.



NUMBLY HE STUMBLED TO HIS AIRCRAFT AND IT WAS ON THE WAY BACK TO HIS FIELD THAT HE CAME TO THE DECISION HE WOULD EVER REGRET MAKING.



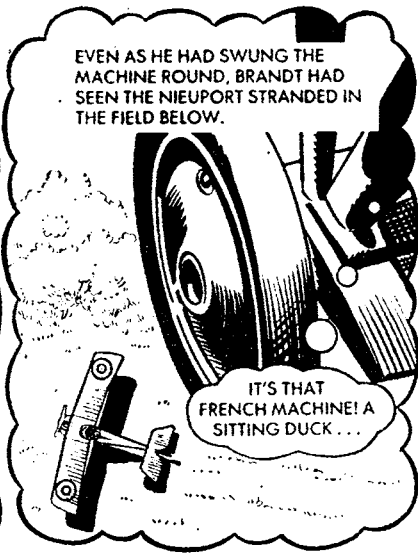
IT WAS THE NEXT DAY BEFORE THE NEWS BROKE THAT RENE DUMONT HAD BEEN BROUGHT DOWN. AT DON'S BASE IT WAS MET WITH THE SAME REACTION AS AT EVERY OTHER ALLIED DROME.

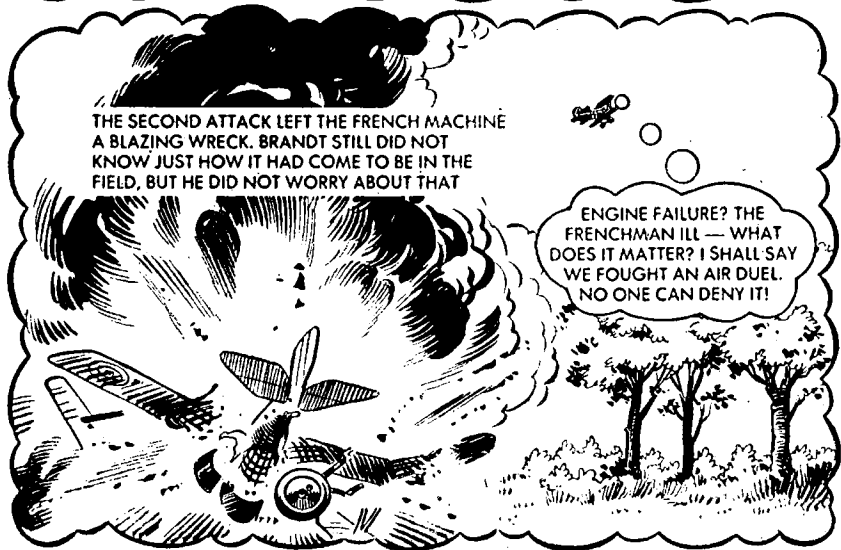
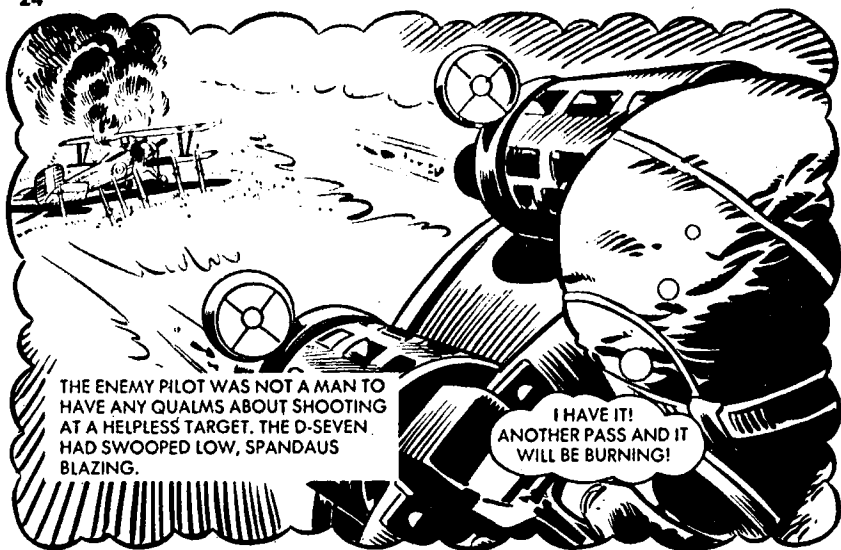


DON HAD LISTENED TO THE TALK WITH SICK, NUMB HORROR. BUT IT WAS THE REST OF THE STORY WHICH BROUGHT A SUDDEN SHOCK.



YET THERE WAS NO WAY DON COULD EXPOSE THE LIE WITHOUT GIVING HIS OWN GUILT AWAY.



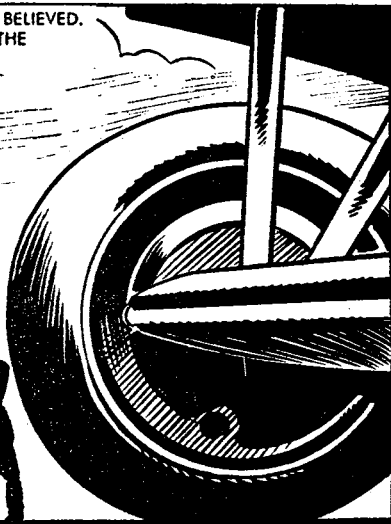




SO BRANDT HAD TOLD HIS LIES AND THEY WERE BELIEVED. AS FAR AS THE WORLD KNEW, HE HAD FOUGHT THE FRENCH ACE IN THE AIR AND SHOT HIM DOWN.

I SUPPOSE  
I WAS A LITTLE  
LUCKY, COMING OUT OF  
THE CLOUD AT JUST  
THE RIGHT TIME.

IT'S A  
GOOD JOB YOU DID.  
YOU'VE CERTAINLY PUT  
THIS SQUADRON IN THE  
LIMELIGHT, MAX.



BRANDT PUT ALL DOUBTS OUT OF HIS MIND, DETERMINED TO KEEP TO THE STORY HE HAD TOLD.



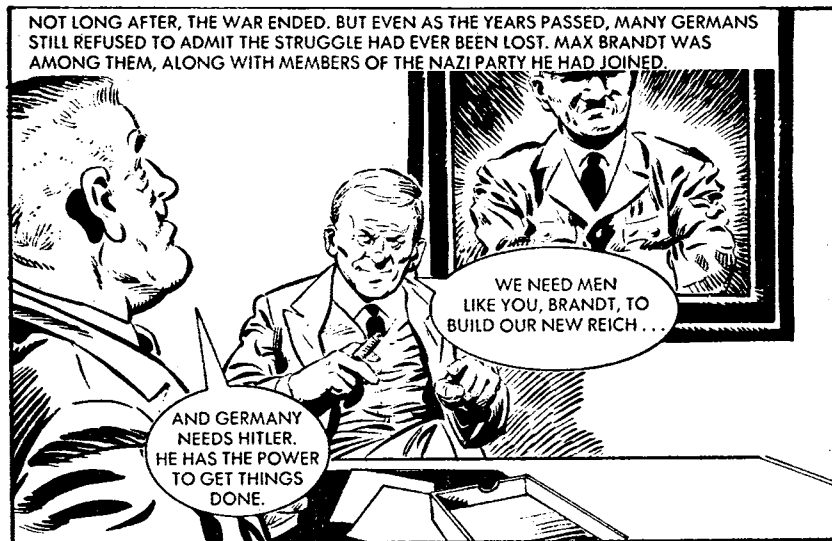
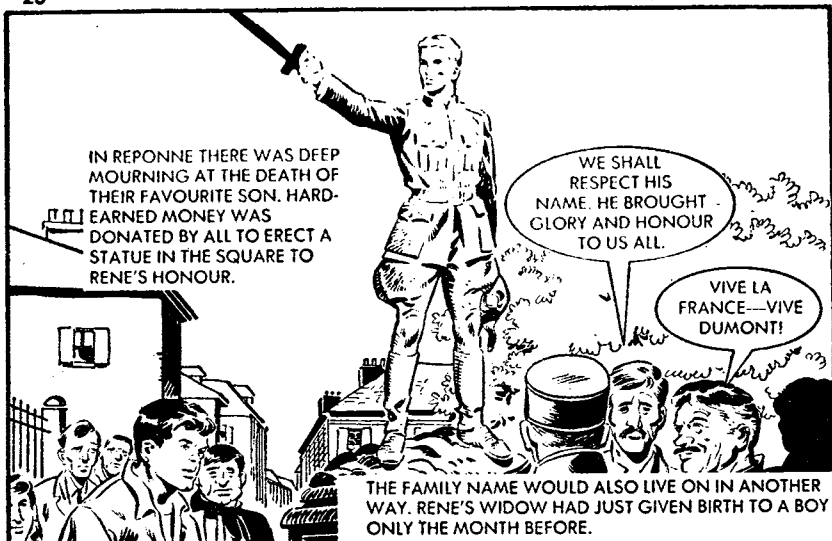
WHO IS TO  
KNOW DIFFERENT?  
CERTAINLY NOBODY  
ELSE HAS MADE  
ANY CLAIM ...

AND DON, THE ONE MAN WHO DID  
KNOW THE TRUTH, DARE DO  
NOTHING ELSE BUT KEEP QUIET.



I CAN'T  
SAY ANYTHING  
NOW. THE SHAME AND  
DISGRACE WOULD  
ONLY BE WORSE.

ONE GOOD THING HAD COME OUT OF IT  
ALL, THOUGH — DON HAD LEARNED TO  
CONQUER HIS NERVES AND FEAR.



WITH MEN LIKE BRANDT AND HIS NEW-FOUND FRIENDS, THERE WOULD YET AGAIN BE WAR. AND MEN LIKE BRANDT AND HIS KIND LOOKED FORWARD EAGERLY TO THE DAY.



WE SHALL TASTE VICTORY THIS TIME, IF WE PUT OUR FAITH IN OUR NEW LEADER.

HE SHALL BRING US SUCCESS —  
HEIL HITLER!

AS THE YEARS PASSED, BOTH THE NEW LUFTWAFFE AND BRANDT, AN INFLUENTIAL OFFICER IN ITS RANKS, ROSE IN POWER.

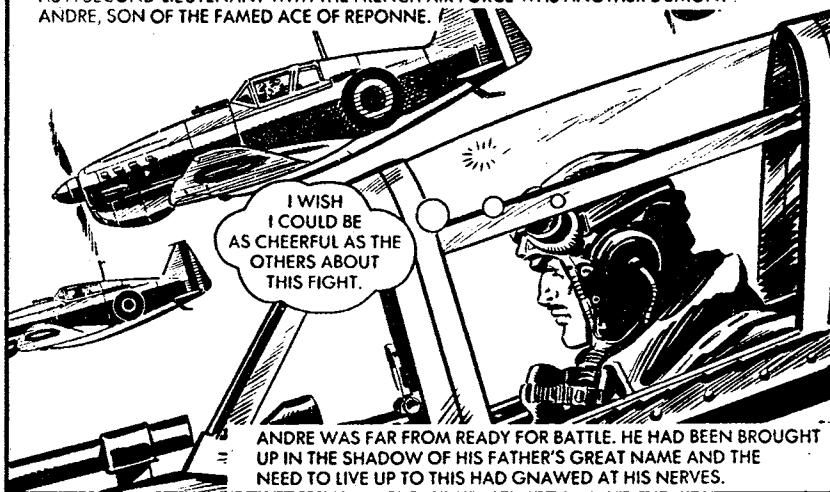


BRITAIN WATCHED THE RISE OF NAZI GERMANY, AND IT WAS PLAIN TO MANY THAT WAR WAS GETTING NEARER. DON DALE, WHO HAD MADE THE R.A.F. HIS CAREER AND WAS NOW A WING-COMMANDER, SAW THE DANGER.



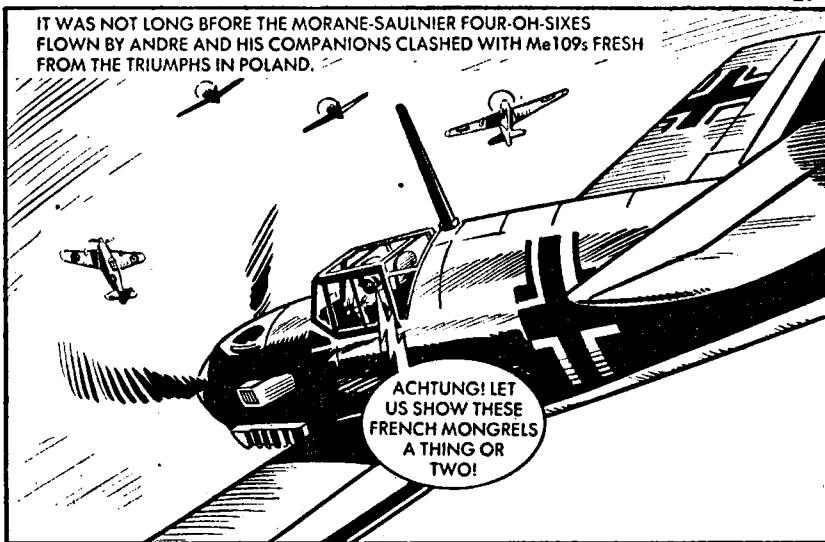
DON DID NOT FLY OPERATIONALLY HIMSELF NOW, BUT WITH HIS VAST EXPERIENCE WAS INVALUABLE AS A STAFF OFFICER.

HOSTILITIES FINALLY BROKE OUT AND THE BATTLE FOR FRANCE BEGAN. FLYING AS A SECOND-LIEUTENANT WITH THE FRENCH AIR FORCE WAS ANOTHER DUMONT — ANDRE, SON OF THE FAMED ACE OF REPONNE.



ANDRE WAS FAR FROM READY FOR BATTLE. HE HAD BEEN BROUGHT UP IN THE SHADOW OF HIS FATHER'S GREAT NAME AND THE NEED TO LIVE UP TO THIS HAD GNAWED AT HIS NERVES.

IT WAS NOT LONG BEFORE THE MORANE-SAULNIER FOUR-0H-SIXES  
 FLOWN BY ANDRE AND HIS COMPANIONS CLASHED WITH ME109s FRESH  
 FROM THE TRIUMPHS IN POLAND.



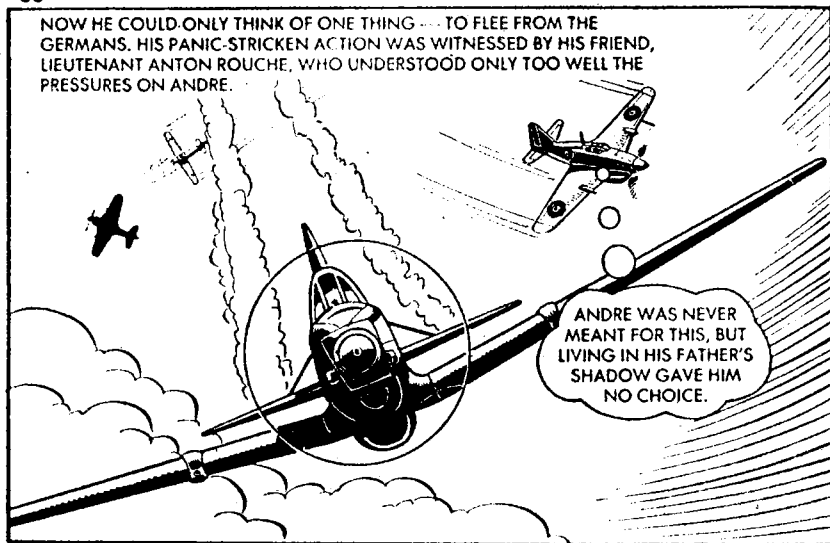
ANDRE DISCOVERED IN THE FOLLOWING  
 COMBAT THAT HE WAS NOT THE MAN HE  
 KNEW HIS FATHER HAD BEEN.



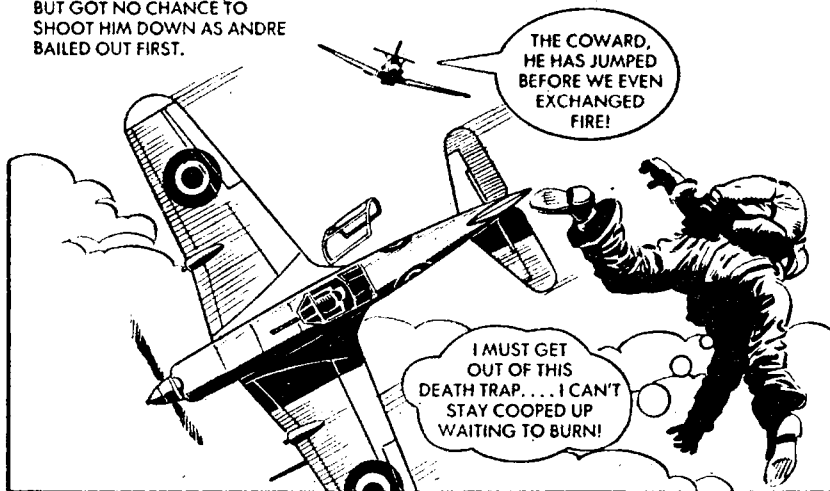
IN THE OPENING CLASH OF THE  
 ENCOUNTER, ANDRE SAW ONE OF  
 HIS COMRADES DIE.



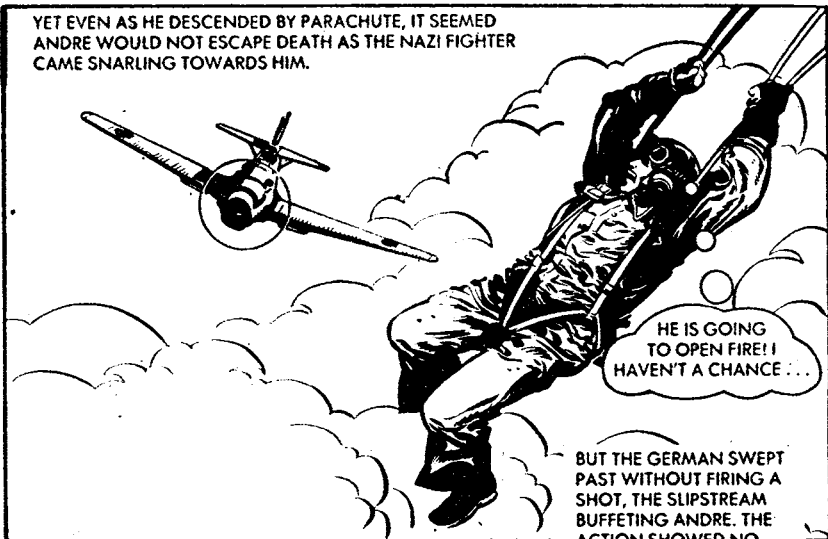
NOW HE COULD ONLY THINK OF ONE THING --- TO FLEE FROM THE GERMANS. HIS PANIC-STRIKEN ACTION WAS WITNESSED BY HIS FRIEND, LIEUTENANT ANTON ROUCHE, WHO UNDERSTOOD ONLY TOO WELL THE PRESSURES ON ANDRE.



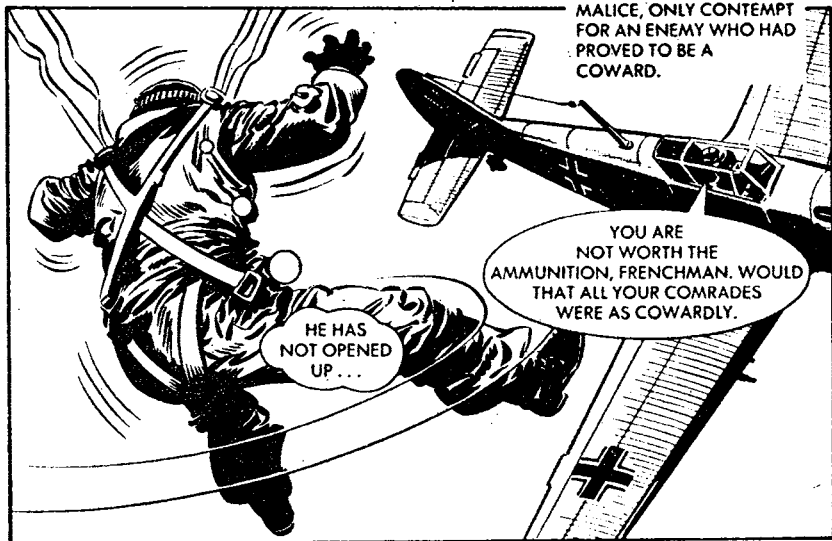
A GERMAN PILOT GAVE CHASE TO THE FLEEING FRENCHMAN BUT GOT NO CHANCE TO SHOOT HIM DOWN AS ANDRE BAILED OUT FIRST.



YET EVEN AS HE DESCENDED BY PARACHUTE, IT SEEMED ANDRE WOULD NOT ESCAPE DEATH AS THE NAZI FIGHTER CAME SNARLING TOWARDS HIM.



BUT THE GERMAN SWEEPED PAST WITHOUT FIRING A SHOT, THE SLIPSTREAM BUFFETING ANDRE. THE ACTION SHOWED NO MALICE, ONLY CONTEMPT FOR AN ENEMY WHO HAD PROVED TO BE A COWARD.



DEEPLY ASHAMED, ALMOST WISHING HE WAS DEAD, ANDRE LANDED SAFELY.

I COULD NOT HELP IT, BUT WHAT WOULD FATHER HAVE THOUGHT OF ME TODAY?



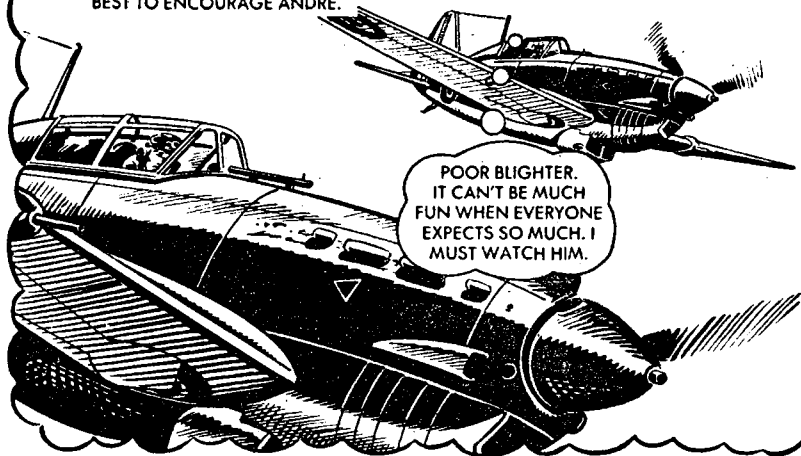
AS HE SKULKED AWAY INTO COVER, HE REMEMBERED ANTON. HE FELT HE HAD LET HIM DOWN AS MUCH AS THE FAMILY NAME.

ANTON KNEW I WAS A COWARD, BUT HE SAID NOTHING THE FIRST TIME...



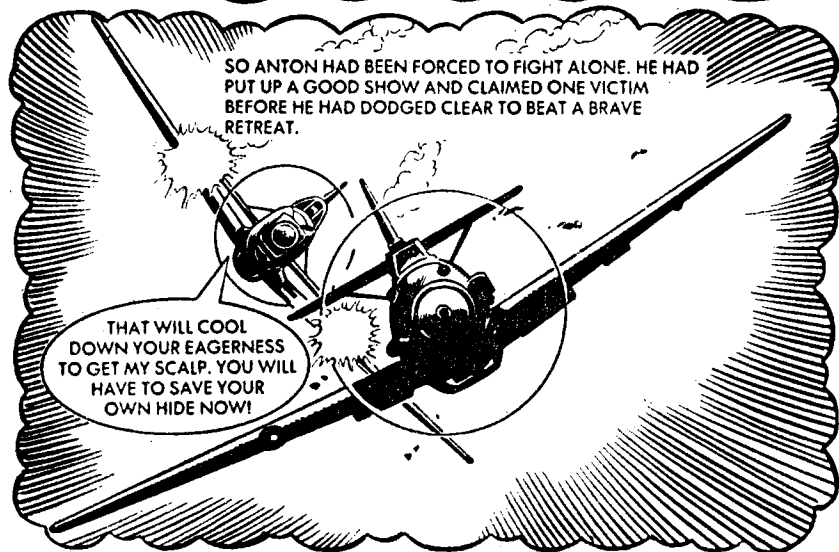
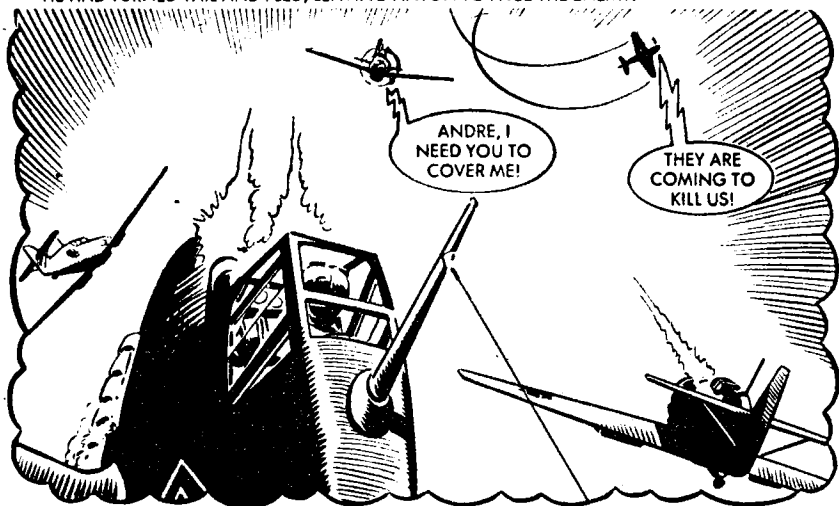
THAT HAD BEEN ON ANDRE'S FIRST DAY WITH THE SQUADRON. HE HAD BEEN FLYING AS ANTON'S WING-MAN, AND THE FRIENDLY PILOT HAD TRIED HIS BEST TO ENCOURAGE ANDRE.

POOR BLIGHTER. IT CAN'T BE MUCH FUN WHEN EVERYONE EXPECTS SO MUCH. I MUST WATCH HIM.

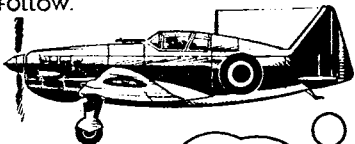




AT THE FIRST SIGHT OF APPROACHING GERMAN FIGHTERS, ANDRE'S NERVE HAD SNAPPED. HE HAD TURNED TAIL AND FLED, LEAVING ANTON TO FACE THE ENEMY.



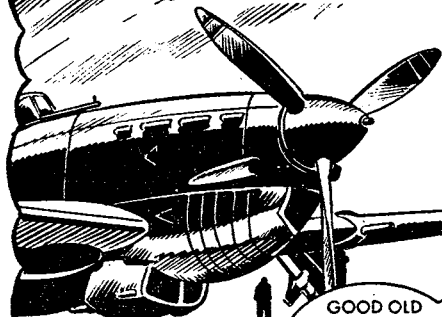
BACK AT THE BASE, ANDRE HAD ALREADY LANDED. HE HAD MUMBLED A VAGUE STORY OF LOSING CONTACT WITH ANTON IN A DOG-FIGHT, AND NOW HE WAITED IN FEARFUL APPREHENSION FOR ANTON TO RETURN, EXPECTING NOTHING BUT DISGRACE TO FOLLOW.



THANK HEAVENS HE MADE IT BACK. NOT THAT I DID ANYTHING TO HELP HIM... HE WILL LET THEM ALL KNOW I AM USELESS.



IF ANTON WAS ANGRY HE DID NOT SHOW IT. HE CHATTED CHEERFULLY WITH SOME OF THE OTHERS AS IF NOTHING HAD HAPPENED.



I CAUGHT HIM A TREAT, BANG ON THE SNOUT.

GOOD OLD ANTON. IT'S A PITY ANDRE LOST YOU IN THE DUST-UP, EH?



ANTON JUST NODDED IN REPLY, AND THEN HE SAW THE LONE FIGURE OF ANDRE AT THE EDGE OF THE RUNWAY.

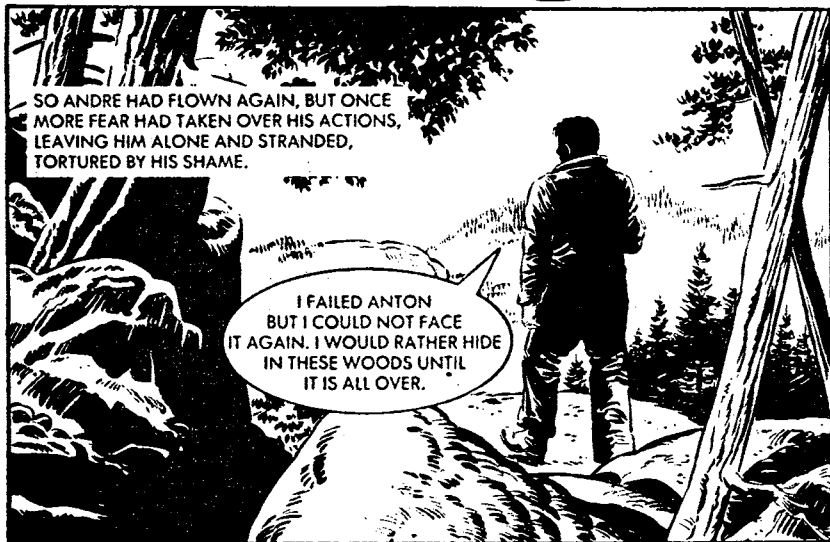
THERE HE IS, EXPECTING HIS WORLD TO FALL IN AS SOON AS I GET TO THE DE-BRIEFING HUT.

THIS IS IT...

BUT ANDRE DID NOT THEN KNOW ANTON WELL ENOUGH TO REALISE HOW FAIR AND UNDERSTANDING HE WAS.

HEY, ANDRE, SEE YOU IN THE MESS IN TEN MINUTES. IT WAS ROTTEN LUCK GETTING SPLIT UP LIKE THAT.

HE ACTS AS IF WHAT I TOLD THE OTHERS WAS THE TRUTH! I DO NOT UNDERSTAND...



ANTON WAS STILL AMONG THE OTHERS WHO FOUGHT, BATTLING ON AGAINST TOUGH ODDS.

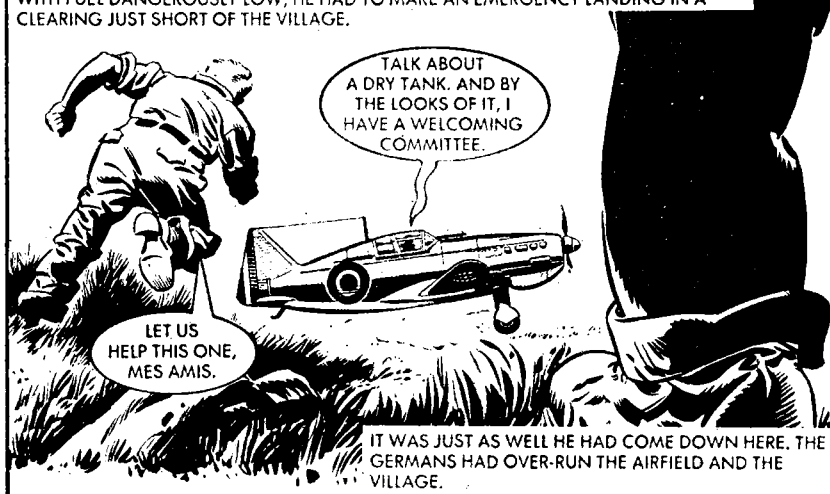
WALK HOME, FRITZ. I'D BETTER GET DOWN MYSELF, MY FUEL IS ALMOST GONE.



IT WAS ANTON'S INTENTION TO LAND AT THE FRENCH FIGHTER BASE AT REPONNE. BUT WITH FUEL DANGEROUSLY LOW, HE HAD TO MAKE AN EMERGENCY LANDING IN A CLEARING JUST SHORT OF THE VILLAGE.

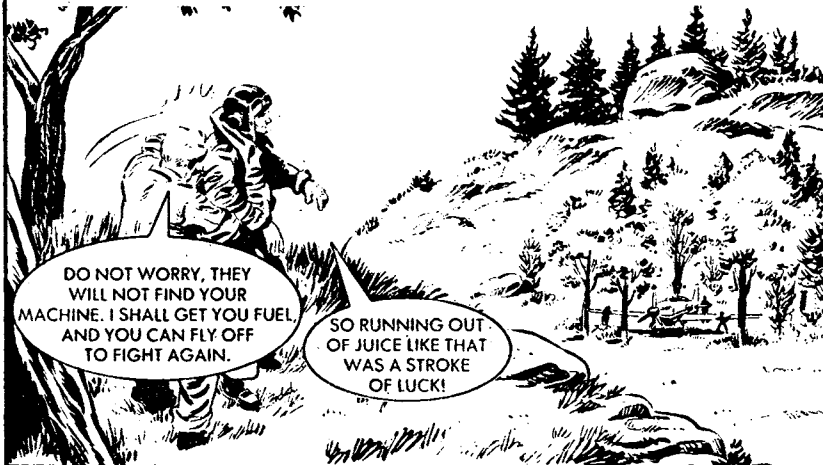
TALK ABOUT A DRY TANK. AND BY THE LOOKS OF IT, I HAVE A WELCOMING COMMITTEE.

LET US HELP THIS ONE, MES AMIS.



IT WAS JUST AS WELL HE HAD COME DOWN HERE. THE GERMANS HAD OVER-RUN THE AIRFIELD AND THE VILLAGE.

THE MEN WHO HAD SEEN HIS ARRIVAL WERE LOCALS, ORGANISED BY RAOUL RIVES, A FARMER WHO HAD NOW DECIDED HIS DUTY WAS TO DEFEY THE GERMANS. HE SAW TO IT AT ONCE THAT THE FIGHTER WAS WELL HIDDEN.



WITHIN MINUTES IT WAS AS IF THERE HAD NEVER BEEN AN AIRCRAFT IN THE CLEARING AS THE MEN SLIPPED AWAY.



... THAT RAOUL EXPLAINED THEY COULD GET FUEL WHICH OTHER LOYAL FRENCHMEN HAD STOLEN FROM THE AIRFIELD AND HIDDEN BEFORE THE GERMANS HAD ARRIVED.



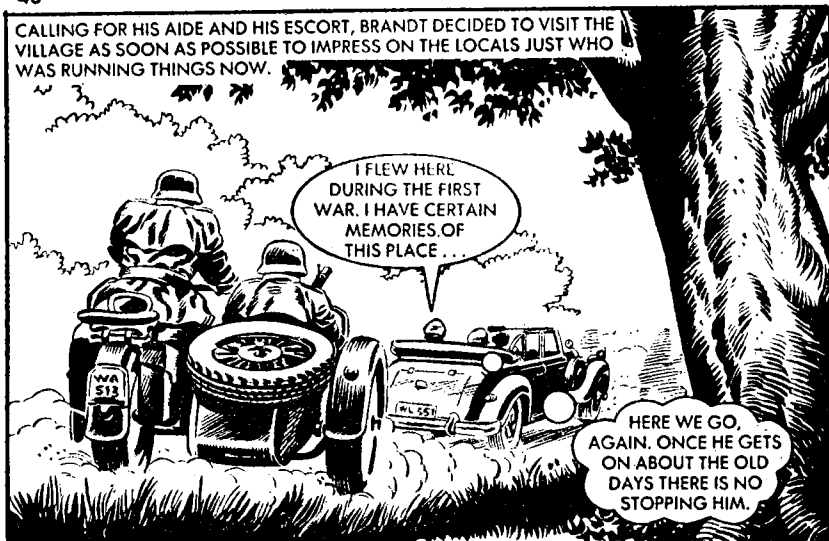
CIVILIAN CLOTHES WERE PRODUCED FOR ANTON TO WEAR AS A DISGUISE.



THE LOCALS MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN IN SUCH GOOD SPIRITS HAD THEY KNOWN WHO WAS PREPARING TO TAKE COMMAND OF THE AIRFIELD AT REPONNE AT THAT VERY MOMENT.



CALLING FOR HIS AIDE AND HIS ESCORT, BRANDT DECIDED TO VISIT THE VILLAGE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO IMPRESS ON THE LOCALS JUST WHO WAS RUNNING THINGS NOW.



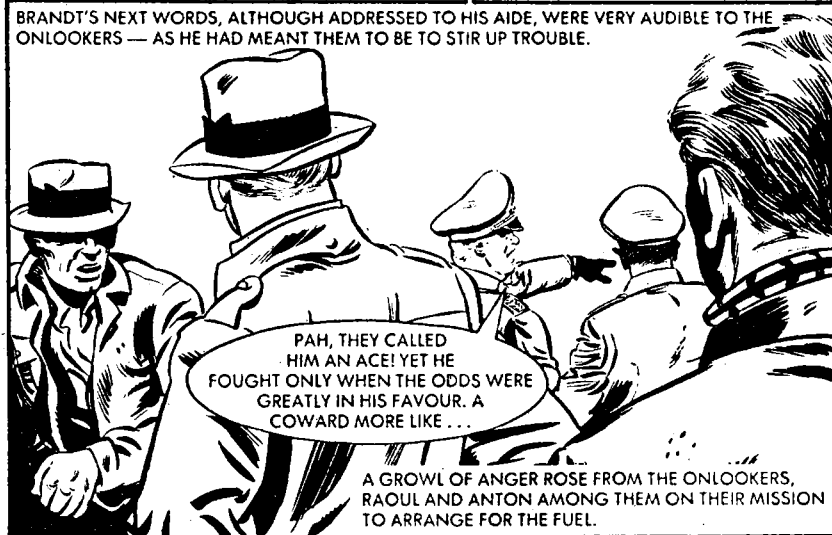
THE NAZI HAD NEVER FORGOTTEN THE WAY HE HAD BEEN TREATED BY THE VILLAGERS. HE ALMOST WISHED THEY WOULD RESIST THE INVADERS SO THAT HE COULD RUTHLESSLY PUNISH THEM ALL.







BRANDT'S NEXT WORDS, ALTHOUGH ADDRESSED TO HIS AIDE, WERE VERY AUDIBLE TO THE ONLOOKERS — AS HE HAD MEANT THEM TO BE TO STIR UP TROUBLE.



THE SCORNFUL REMARKS REALLY ANGERED ANTON. HIS HOT TEMPER GOT THE BETTER OF CAUTION, AND HE YELLED AT THE NAZI.



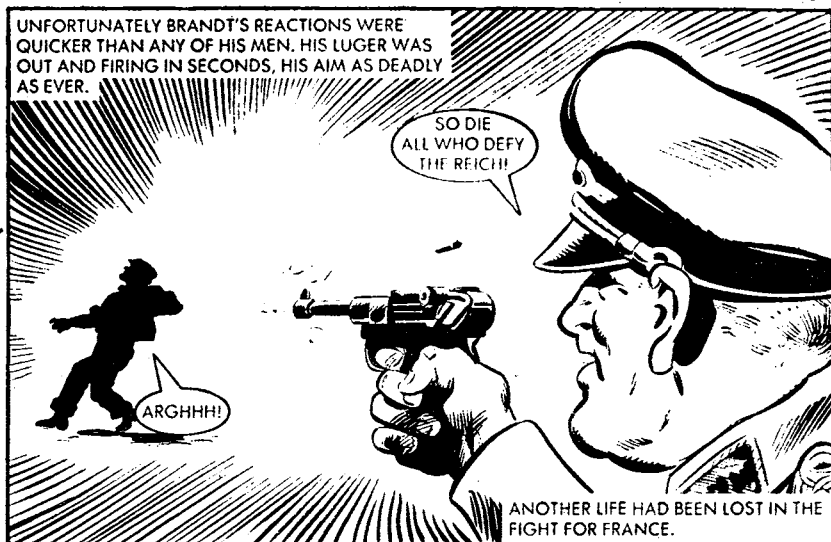
... BUT ANTON ACTED INSTINCTIVELY, LASHING OUT WITH HIS FIST.



... IT SEEMED FOR ONE MOMENT THAT HE WOULD GET CLEAR BEFORE THE BEMUSED ESCORT COULD ACT.



UNFORTUNATELY BRANDT'S REACTIONS WERE QUICKER THAN ANY OF HIS MEN. HIS LUGER WAS OUT AND FIRING IN SECONDS, HIS AIM AS DEADLY AS EVER.



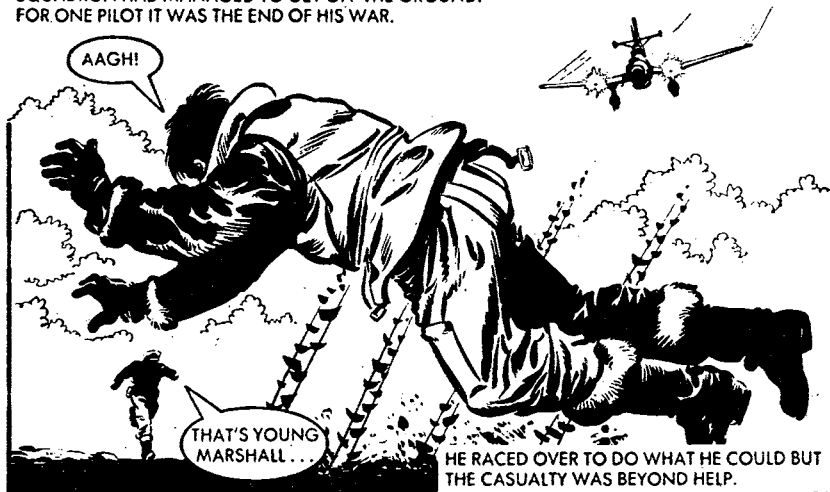
IT WAS OBVIOUS THE NAZI HAD ENJOYED THE INCIDENT. IT HAD GIVEN HIM AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW THE VILLAGERS WHAT THEY COULD EXPECT.



FRANCE HAD NOT YET FALLEN, DESPITE BRANDT'S BOAST. BUT THE DEFENDERS WERE HAVING A ROUGH TIME — AS DON DALE COULD TESTIFY AT THE FRENCH AIRFIELD TO THE WEST WHERE HIS HURRICANE SQUADRON WAS BASED.



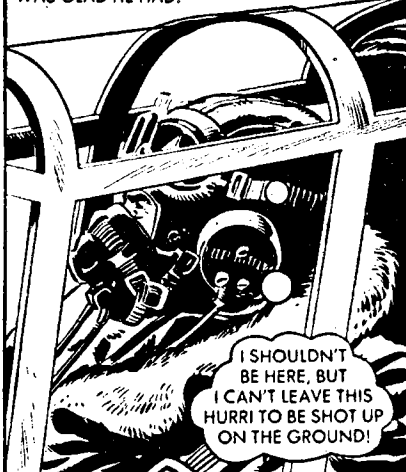
THE RAID HAD BEEN UNEXPECTED, BUT MOST OF THE SQUADRON HAD MANAGED TO GET OFF THE GROUND. FOR ONE PILOT IT WAS THE END OF HIS WAR.



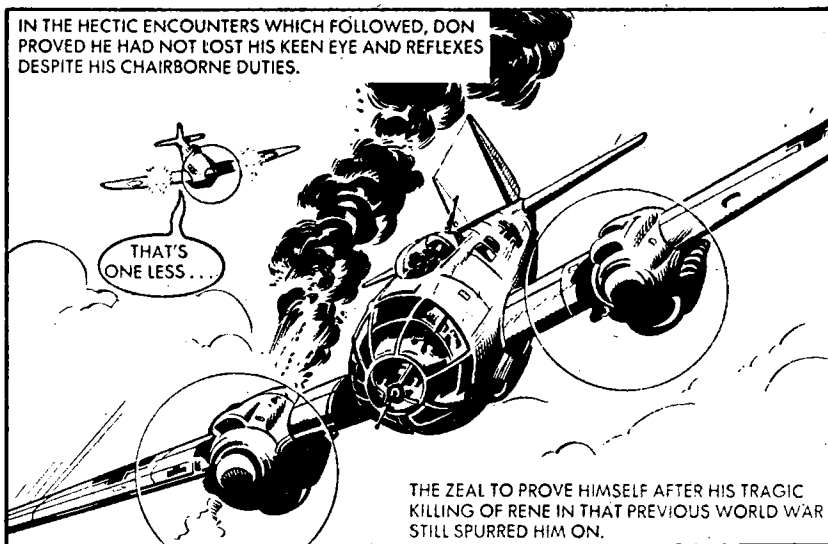
WITHIN SECONDS DON WAS CLIMBING INTO THE HURRICANE HIMSELF, IGNORING THE FACT THAT HE WAS NOT OFFICIALLY EXPECTED TO.

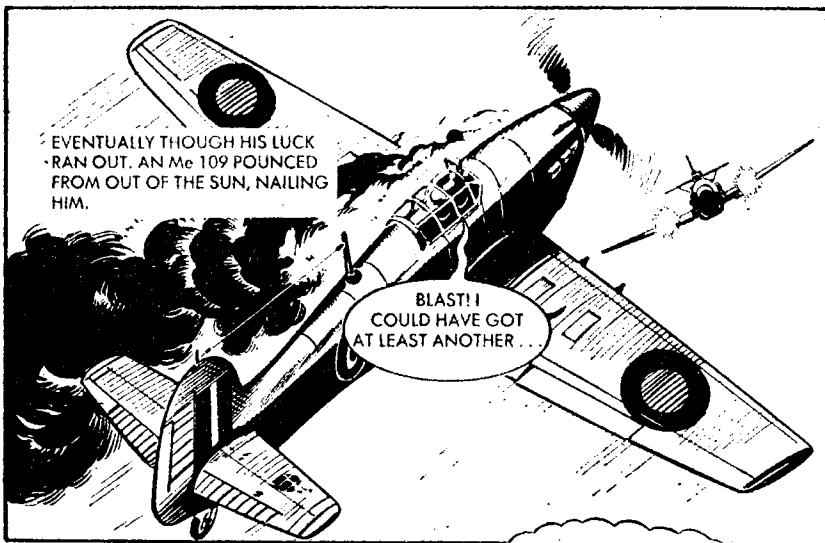


DON HAD KEPT HIS HAND IN AT FLYING. NOW, AS HE PREPARED TO DO BATTLE, HE WAS GLAD HE HAD.

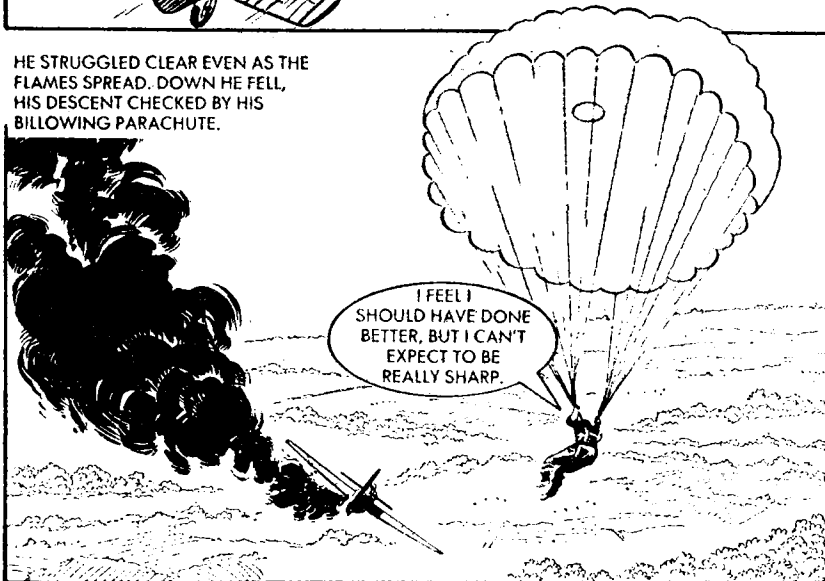


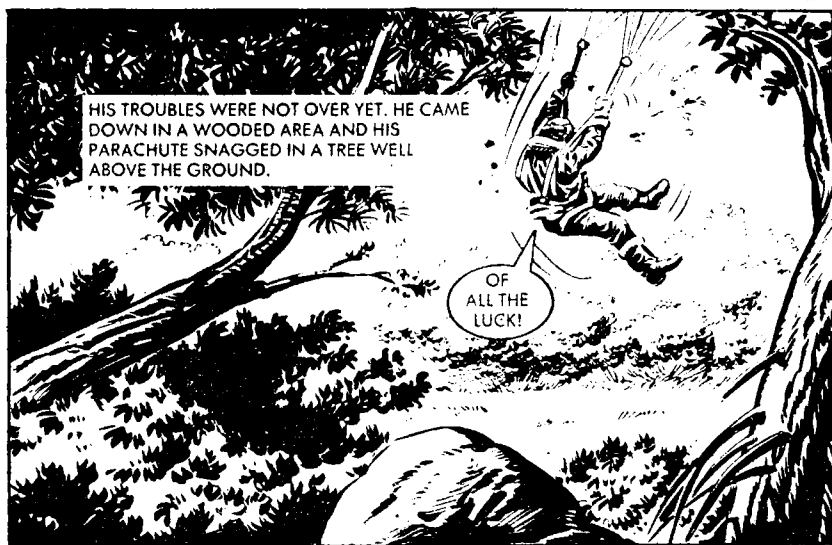
IN THE HECTIC ENCOUNTERS WHICH FOLLOWED, DON PROVED HE HAD NOT LOST HIS KEEN EYE AND REFLEXES DESPITE HIS CHAIRBORNE DUTIES.





HE STRUGGLED CLEAR EVEN AS THE FLAMES SPREAD. DOWN HE FELL, HIS DESCENT CHECKED BY HIS BILLOWING PARACHUTE.





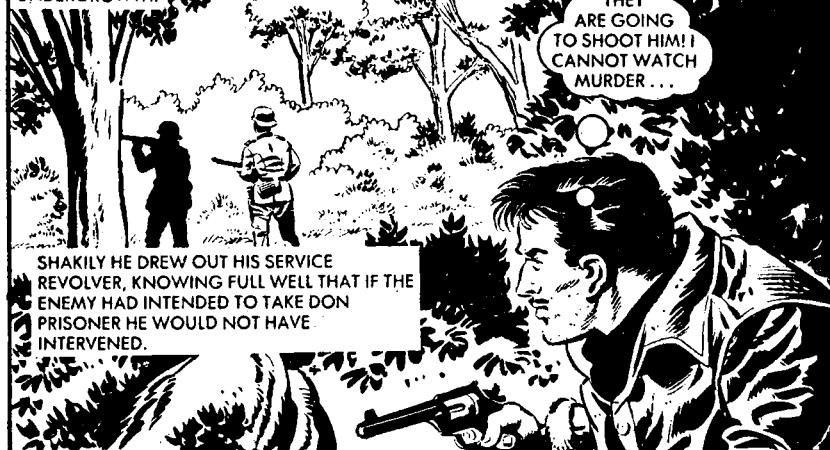
IT WAS EVEN WORSE LUCK WHICH BROUGHT THE TWO GERMAN SOLDIERS DOWN THE PATH BEFORE DON COULD WORK HIS WAY OUT OF THE PREDICAMENT.



DON KNEW THESE GERMANS WEREN'T JOKING — THEY INTENDED TO KILL HIM. THERE WAS NOTHING HE COULD DO BUT WAIT FOR THE BULLET.



ANDRE DUMONT, STILL SKULKING AROUND SINCE HE HAD BEEN SHOT DOWN, HAD SEEN DON DESCEND. HE HAD BEEN JUST ABOUT TO AID THE BRITISH PILOT WHEN THE GERMANS HAD EMERGED FROM THE UNDERGROWTH.





ONLY TOO WELL AWARE THAT THE SHOTS WOULD BE OVERHEARD AND WOULD BRING OTHER GERMANS, ANDRE STILL DID NOT HESITATE NOW THAT HE HAD MADE HIS DECISION.



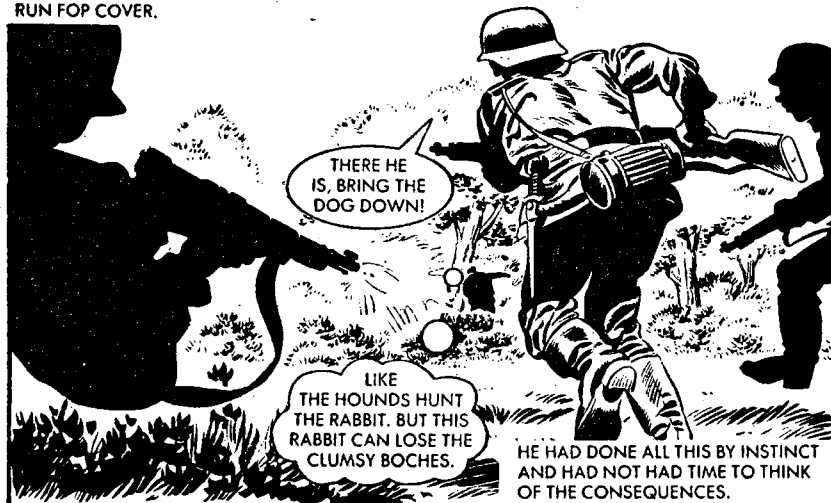
THE TWO SHOTS WERE FOLLOWED BY GUTTURAL SHOUTS FROM OTHER NAZIS OPERATING IN THIS AREA. ANDRE'S FEARS HAD BEEN JUSTIFIED AS HE HELPED DON TO THE GROUND.



DON DID NOT LIKE THIS IDEA, BUT IT DID SEEM A SENSIBLE ONE IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES.



WITH DON OUT OF SIGHT, AS ANDRE HAD PREDICTED, THE GERMANS CHASED HIM. HE LET THEM SEE HIM BEFORE BEGINNING HIS DANGEROUS RUN FOR COVER.



FROM THE CAVE WHERE HE HAD TAKEN REFUGE, DON HEARD THE SHOTS AND THEN LISTENED AS THE SOUNDS OF THE PURSUIT GREW FAINTER. IT WAS HALF-AN-HOUR BEFORE ANDRE JOINED HIM.

PHEW, AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU! I THOUGHT YOU HAD BOUGHT IT.

NOT QUITE, BUT THOSE BOCHES WERE NOT AS SLOW AND STUPID AS I THOUGHT!

AND STILL DON DID NOT KNOW JUST WHO HIS RESCUER WAS — THEY HAD JUST EXCHANGED CHRISTIAN NAMES.

IT WAS ONLY THEN THAT ANDRE SAW HIS COMPANION WAS WOUNDED IN THE LEG.

DASHED BAD LUCK — SOME SHRAPNEL FROM THE DOG-FIGHT.

IT IS NOT TOO BAD, BUT YOU MUST HAVE A DOCTOR.

ANDRE HAD BEEN MEANING TO LEAVE THIS ENGLISHMAN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BUT THE WOUND CHANGED ALL THAT.

I CAN'T DESERT HIM TO FEND FOR HIMSELF NOW. I'LL HAVE TO SEE HE GETS AID.

SO BOTH MEN SET OFF SLOWLY, ANDRE MAKING FULL USE OF HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THIS DISTRICT. HE WAS WELL AWARE JUST WHO WOULD HELP A BRITISH AIRMAN AND BE TRUSTED TO REMAIN SILENT.



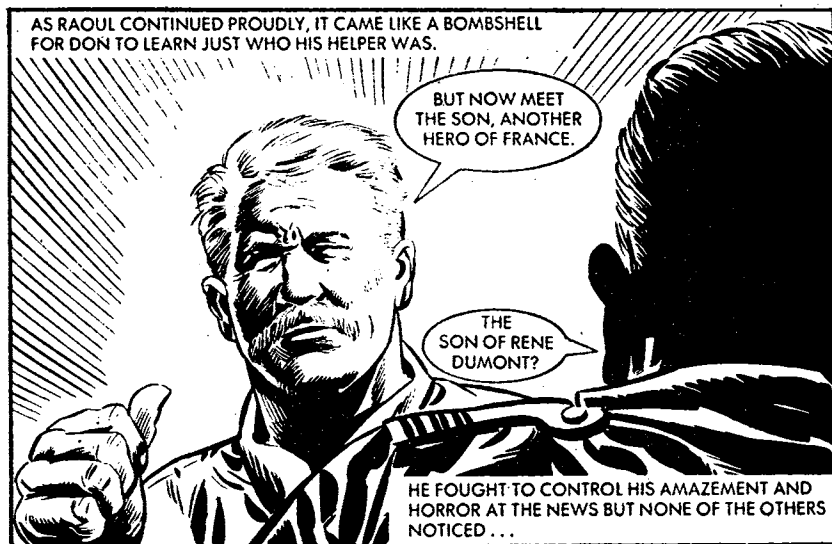
THE FARMER WAS INDEED A FRIEND — THE PATRIOTIC, BURLY RAOUL. HE BROUGHT THE TWO FUGITIVES INTO HIS HOUSE, DELIGHTED TO SEE ANDRE DUMONT WAS STILL ALIVE.



IT WAS AFTER A WELCOME MEAL THAT DON SPOTTED A PHOTOGRAPH OF RENE DUMONT IN A PLACE OF HONOUR. HE LIFTED IT REVERENTLY.



AS RAOUL CONTINUED PROUDLY, IT CAME LIKE A BOMBSHELL FOR DON TO LEARN JUST WHO HIS HELPER WAS.



... FOR NOW IT WAS ANDRE'S TURN TO RECEIVE A SHOCK WHEN RAOUL RELATED GRIMLY WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO ANTON IN THE VILLAGE.

... SHOT DOWN LIKE  
A DOG. BUT HE HAD A  
TEMPER THAT ANTON.

ANTON?  
NOT ANTON  
ROUCHE...

RAOUL NODDED GRIMLY. HE HAD BEEN UNAWARE THAT  
THE TWO PILOTS HAD BEEN SUCH GOOD FRIENDS.

IT WAS A CRUEL BLOW AND SHAME FLOODED  
THROUGH ANDRE. HE FELT SOMEHOW  
RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS FRIEND'S DEATH.

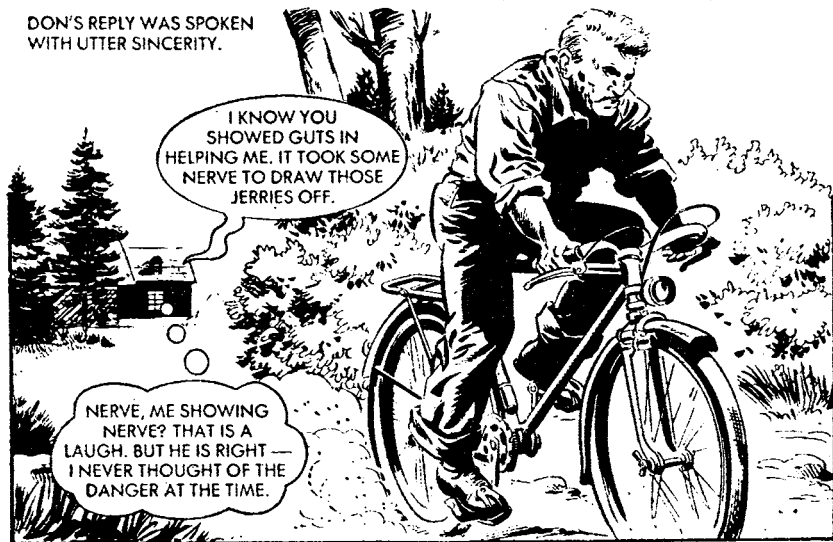
HE LISTENED GRIMLY AS RAOUL  
EXPLAINED HOW ANTON'S AIRCRAFT  
WAS STILL HIDDEN CLOSE BY.

HE WAS  
GOING TO FLY TO  
THE BRITISH. WE HAD  
THE FUEL ALL  
ARRANGED...

SO ANTON IS  
DEAD, MY FRIEND  
WHO HAD FAITH IN ME  
WHEN EVEN I  
HAD NONE!



DON'S REPLY WAS SPOKEN WITH UTTER SINCERITY.



THE ENCOURAGEMENT FROM THE R.A.F. PILOT BROUGHT COURAGE AND CALM TO ANDRE, QUALITIES HE DID NOT THINK HE HAD.

YOU ARE RIGHT.  
I SHALL FLY THAT  
AIRCRAFT — ANTON'S AIRCRAFT.  
THE BOCHES WILL FIND THEY  
HAVE NOT YET WON!

THAT'S THE  
SPIRIT. WE MAY  
LOSE A FEW BATTLES,  
BUT WE WON'T LOSE  
THE WAR!

ANDRE'S ENTHUSIASM MADE DON REALISE IT WAS TIME FOR HIM TO FACE UP TO THE TRUTH AS WELL.

I SHALL  
SEEK RAOUL.  
THEY WILL HELP ME  
GET THE AIRCRAFT  
READY.

BEFORE THAT,  
THERE'S SOMETHING  
I MUST TELL YOU . . .



DON KNEW THIS WAS THE TIME TO GET IT OFF HIS CHEST. FOR TOO LONG IT HAD BEEN A CONSTANT SHADOW OVER HIM.



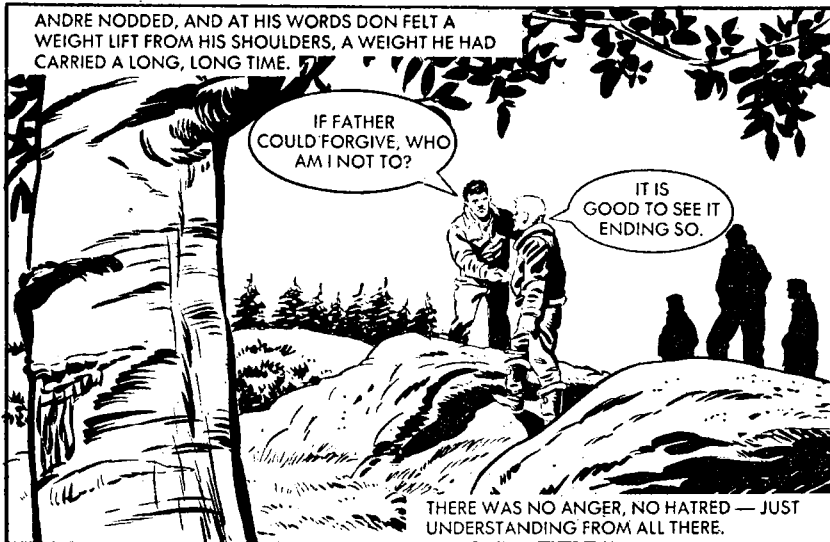
AS DON SADLY EXPLAINED ABOUT THE PAST, HE SAW RAOUL AND SOME HELPERS ENTER THE BARN. BUT NOTHING WOULD STOP HIM NOW FROM TELLING THE TRUTH BEHIND THE DEATH OF RENE DUMONT.



WHEN DON HAD FINISHED HIS STORY, ANDRE WALKED SLOWLY OUTSIDE AND THE OTHERS FOLLOWED. THERE WAS A LONG SILENCE, AT LAST BROKEN BY ANDRE.

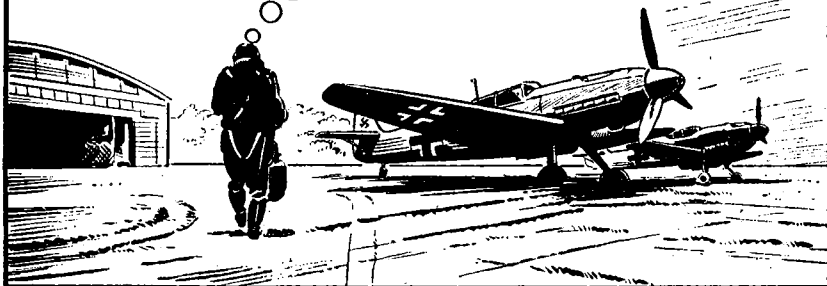


ANDRE NODDED, AND AT HIS WORDS DON FELT A WEIGHT LIFT FROM HIS SHOULDERS, A WEIGHT HE HAD CARRIED A LONG, LONG TIME.



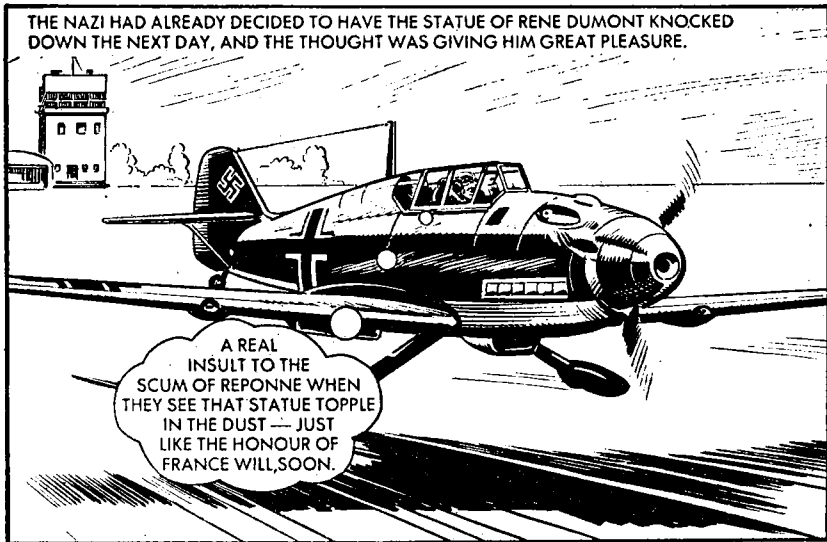
AT REPONNE FIGHTER BASE, MAX BRANDT WAS PLANNING ON TAKING TO THE AIR FOR THE WEEKLY FLIGHT HE INSISTED ON MAKING TO KEEP HIMSELF UP TO SCRATCH.

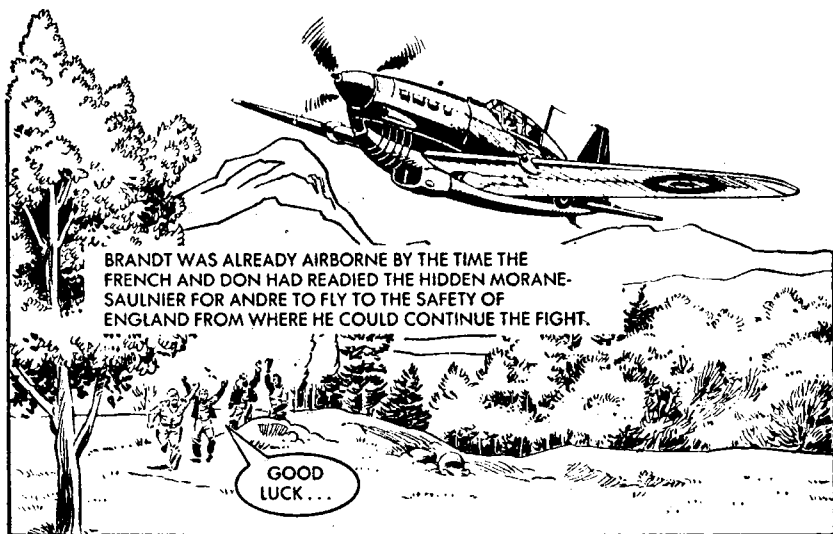
THINGS ARE GOING WELL. A QUICK FLIGHT WILL GIVE ME AN APPETITE FOR LUNCH.



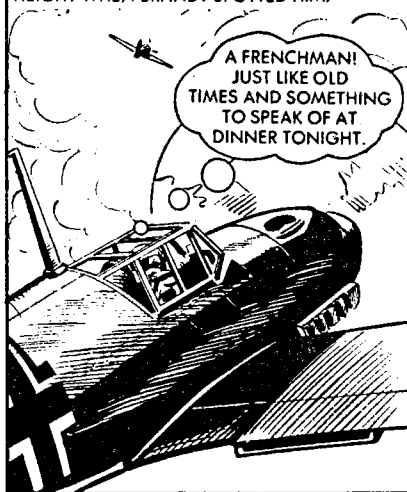
THE NAZI HAD ALREADY DECIDED TO HAVE THE STATUE OF RENE DUMONT KNOCKED DOWN THE NEXT DAY, AND THE THOUGHT WAS GIVING HIM GREAT PLEASURE.

A REAL INSULT TO THE SCUM OF REPONNE WHEN THEY SEE THAT STATUE TOPPLE IN THE DUST — JUST LIKE THE HONOUR OF FRANCE WILL, SOON.





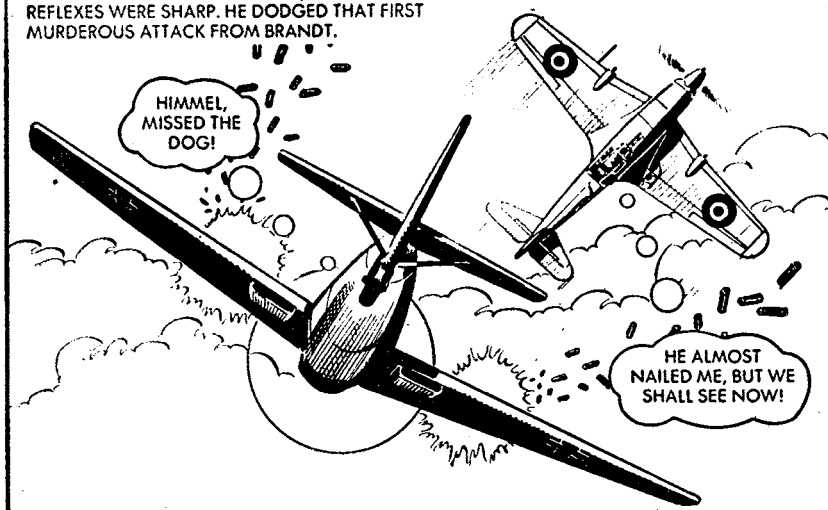
ANDRE HAD JUST CLIMBED TO A REASONABLE HEIGHT WHEN BRANDT SPOTTED HIM.



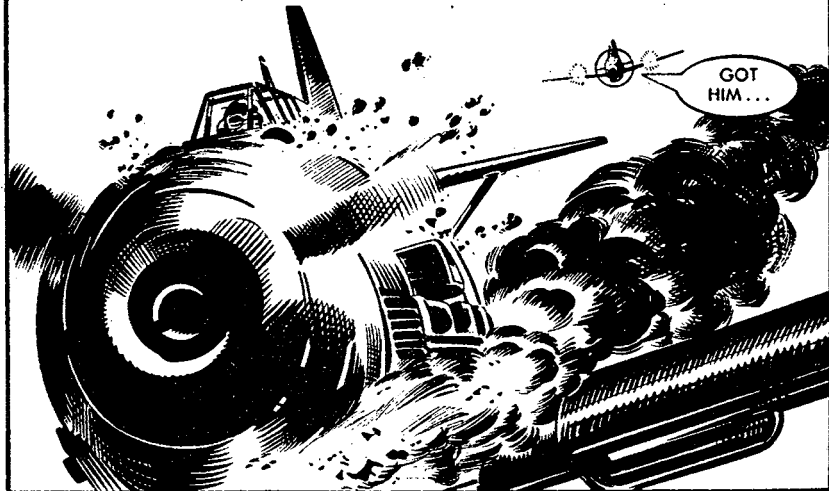
A WARNING VOICE IN HIS EAR ALERTED ANDRE... AND FOR EVER AFTER HE COULD ONLY THINK IT HAD BEEN HIS FATHER... RIDICULOUS THOUGH THE IDEA MIGHT SEEM.



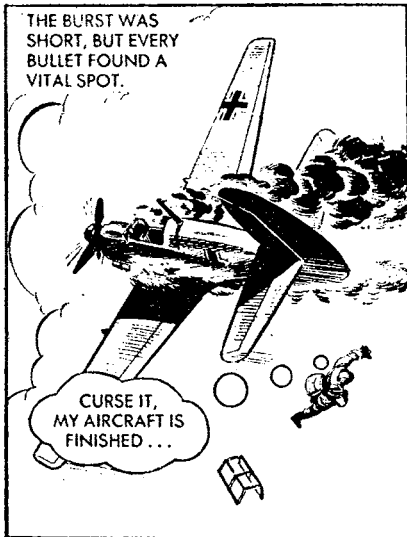
CONFIDENT NOW OF HIS ABILITY, ANDRE'S REFLEXES WERE SHARP. HE DODGED THAT FIRST MURDEROUS ATTACK FROM BRANDT.



A SWIFT CORRECTION AND ANDRE SAW THE GERMAN FIGHTER SLIDE INTO HIS SIGHTS. HE OPENED UP AT ONCE, FLYING AS COURAGEOUSLY AS HIS FATHER HAD EVER DONE.

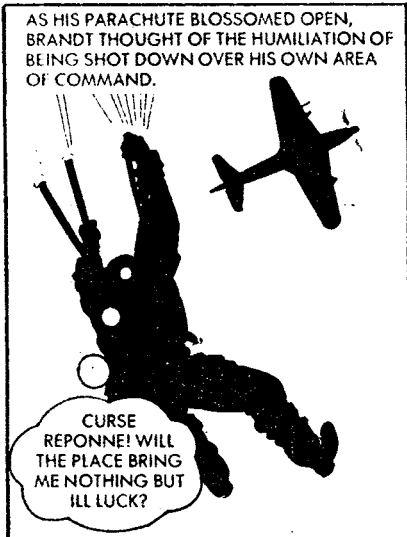


THE BURST WAS SHORT, BUT EVERY BULLET FOUND A VITAL SPOT.



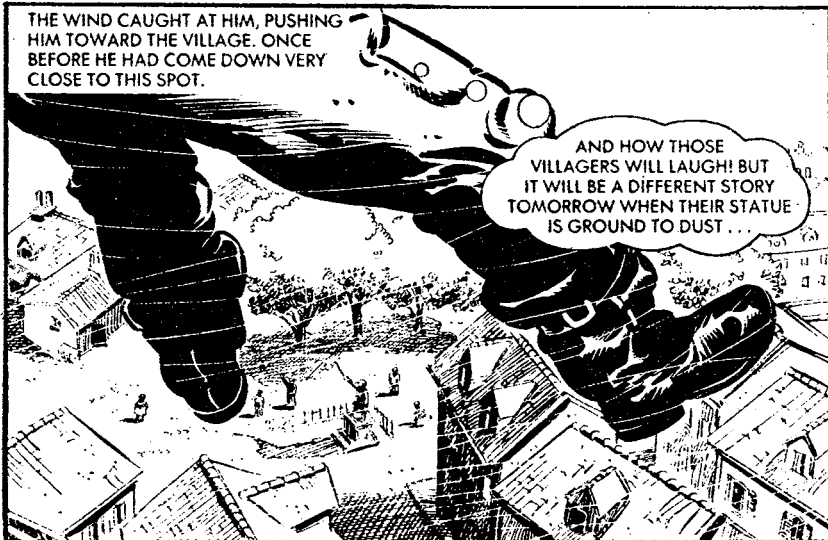
CURSE IT,  
MY AIRCRAFT IS  
FINISHED ...

AS HIS PARACHUTE BLOSSOMED OPEN, BRANDT THOUGHT OF THE HUMILIATION OF BEING SHOT DOWN OVER HIS OWN AREA OF COMMAND.



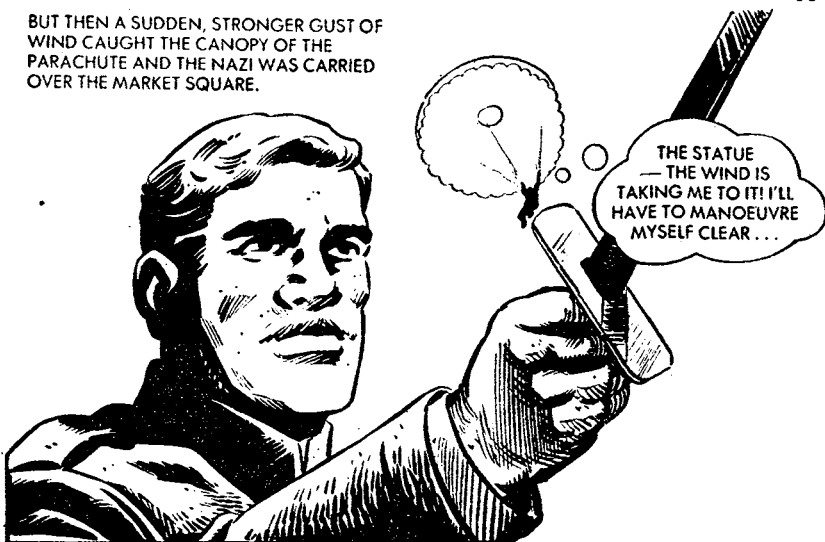
CURSE  
REPONNE! WILL  
THE PLACE BRING  
ME NOTHING BUT  
ILL LUCK?

THE WIND CAUGHT AT HIM, PUSHING HIM TOWARD THE VILLAGE. ONCE BEFORE HE HAD COME DOWN VERY CLOSE TO THIS SPOT.



AND HOW THOSE  
VILLAGERS WILL LAUGH! BUT  
IT WILL BE A DIFFERENT STORY  
TOMORROW WHEN THEIR STATUE  
IS GROUND TO DUST ...

BUT THEN A SUDDEN, STRONGER GUST OF WIND CAUGHT THE CANOPY OF THE PARACHUTE AND THE NAZI WAS CARRIED OVER THE MARKET SQUARE.



PERHAPS IN THOSE LAST FEW SECONDS BRANDT SAW WHAT LAY AHEAD OF HIM. HE CERTAINLY TRIED TO SWING HIMSELF CLEAR OF THE DANGER BELOW.



SO BRANDT DIED IN THE SQUARE AT REPONNE, IMPALED ON THE POINT OF THE DEAD FRENCH ACE'S SWORD. THAT DAY HAD INDEED SEEN A REPAYMENT AT REPONNE.

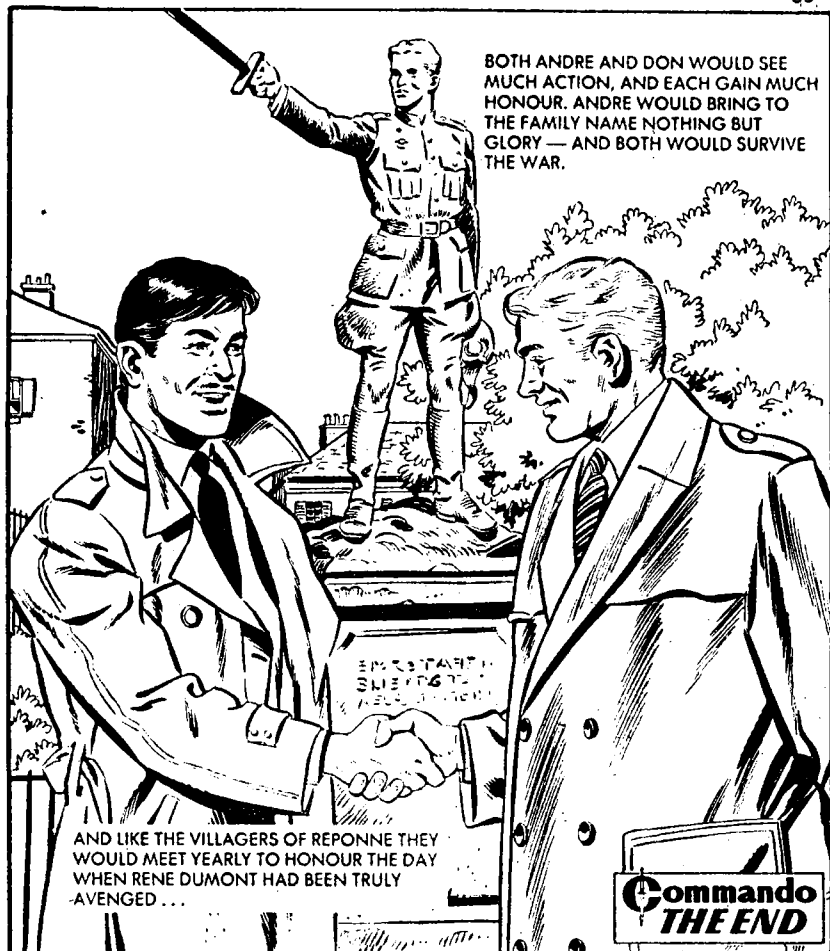


ABOUT THIS TIME FRANCE FINALLY FELL AND THE NAZIS BECAME MASTERS FOR A WHILE, BUT ANDRE WAS ALREADY HEADING FOR ENGLAND TO CARRY ON THE FIGHT...

... AND DON WOULD SOON FOLLOW, SMUGGLED OUT OF THE COUNTRY BY DEDICATED FRENCHMEN.







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